

Media Literacy in higher education: a model

Case study: the eCLIPse project at the University of Barcelona

1. Introduction

1.1. Objectives

This paper aims to *explore the theoretic background of the concept of 'Media Literacy'* and to *propose a model for media literacy education in higher education*, based on a recent experience at the University of Barcelona. This experience was lived by 30 students in the frame of the eCLIPse project, a European Media Literacy programme partly funded by the European Commission (*eLearning* initiative)¹. The project has just reached the end of its first phase and is currently being carried out with 65 students from 4 different European universities. It focuses on media and representation: students analyze the portrayal of ethnic minorities and immigrants in the media.

One of the expected results or outputs of the eCLIPse project is a *model for media literacy* in higher education. This model consists of two parts: the educational aspects of *analysis/evaluation* of media on one hand, and *media production* on the other. This output was defined as follows:

*A model for training young European citizens to create and distribute, with the necessary media literacy knowledge, new and innovative audiovisual material through alternative channels (...).*²

This paper will mainly focus on the first part, i.e. the *analysis* and *evaluation* of media. In this first part, students from Belgium, Norway, Germany and Spain

¹ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/elearning/>

² See project definition and outputs: <http://tv-lmi.ub.es/eclipse/>

selected, analyzed and evaluated a number of media products in their country, and presented them at a Media Forum, which took place in Barcelona, May 14-15. At this Media Forum, students were the main actors. They discussed, compared, evaluated and reflected on their own fragments and on the other countries'. In a way, this event was the evaluation of the first stage of the project, as it reflected the learning process the students had gone through for more than 3 months previous to the meeting.

This paper and the model proposed here, are a result of the reflections of the first phase of the project. Part of it is based on the experiences of students and trainers, and on the conclusions drawn at the Media Forum.³ However, I found most of the material for the model in my own experience with the students at the University of Barcelona, as their tutor. In this sense, we could say that this paper is a case study.

1.2. A double model

The model I am proposing has two dimensions to it: it is a model for *students* (or any learner) to follow as they are introduced in media analysis and media literacy on the one hand, and a model for *teachers* (or any trainer) to take as an example and a source of information for media literacy education. This idea of a 'double model' is associated to some of the premises of the constructivist paradigm, which considers the learning process as an interactive experience that involves both learner and teacher. At the same time, it will allow us to have a more complete view on what media literacy means in higher education.

1.3. Concepts

³ All about this event, about the aims, activities, and provisional results of the eCLIPse project, can be found at: <http://tv-lmi.ub.es/eclipse/>

Throughout this paper, several concepts will repeatedly be used. When we talk about ‘media literacy’ and ‘educational models’, we should therefore explore these concepts thoroughly. The paper therefore aims to define ‘*media literacy*’, ‘*media literacy education*’ and ‘*educational models*’, as a theoretical framework to place the eCLIPse model.

Although the subject of the project - portrayal of ethnic minorities and immigrants in the media - will be present in the construction of the model at all times, we have tried to make the model as general as possible. This way it aims to be a model that can be applied to other fields, such as representation of gender, youngsters and other specific social groups.

But let us first explore some concepts...

2. Media Literacy and Education

2.1. Media Literacy

What is media literacy and when did this expression come about? Historically, the concept of ‘literacy’ meant being able to understand and use language: having the skill to interpret signs (letters), which, when put together, form words that convey meaning. For a very long time, the printed word was the dominant medium, and it still is. But although knowing how to read and write is still essential, it is no longer *sufficient* in a world where the image and audiovisual media – be it television, cinema, information technologies or the Internet – is increasingly becoming the dominant medium (Goodman 2003, p.4).

An important shift in media education, which led to the term ‘media literacy’, took place in the early 1960 in the US. It emphasized teaching *about* the media instead of *through* the media. Cultural critics such as Vance Packard (*The hidden persuaders*) and Marshall McLuhan (*Understanding Media, The Gutenberg Galaxy*) contributed to the idea that students should be encouraged to develop critical attitudes toward the media. The study of media-produced

messages and their effects on mass audiences is the basis for what is broadly called 'Media Literacy' (Goodman 2003).

Media Literacy as a policy took a decisive direction in 1972, when the connection was raised between television violence and antisocial behaviour. From that moment onward, the concept became essential and was spread throughout Canada, Europe and Australia.

Till today, the most cited definition of Media Literacy in many handbooks and articles on the subject, is the one that came out at the 1992 Aspen Media Literacy Leadership Institute:

*It is the ability to ACCESS, ANALYZE, EVALUATE and COMMUNICATE information in all its forms.*⁴

The Center for Media Literacy⁵ recently expanded this definition in order to respond to new situations in the 21st century media culture, and defines Media Literacy as a movement and an approach to education, rather than just an 'ability':

*Media Literacy is a 21st century approach to education. It provides a framework to access, analyze, evaluate and create messages in a variety of forms (...). Media Literacy builds an understanding of the role of media in society as well as essential skills of inquiry and self-expression necessary for citizens of a democracy.*⁶

By the beginning of the 90s it was clear that all agents would have to learn to both *comprehend* media messages as well as use technology to *create* their own messages.

⁴ P. Aufderheide took note of the definition collectively reached at this historical meeting, where the concept of Media Literacy as an emerging branch of social science was born: Aufderheide, Patricia (1993). *Media Literacy: a report of the National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy*. Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute.

⁵ Center for Media Literacy: www.medialit.org

⁶ *CML MediaLit Kit Orientation Guide*, Center for Media Literacy, www.medialit.org, p.8.

The AMLA (Alliance for a Media Literate America)⁷ defines Media literacy as the *'development of skills to empower persons to be both critical thinkers and creative producers of an increasingly wide range of messages using image, language and sound.'* (AMLA, 2001).

Whatever definition we take as a basis, it is obvious that we cannot think of Media Literacy without thinking of education.

2.2. Media Literacy Education

In the last 40 years, the field of media literacy education has emerged to organize and promote the importance of teaching this expanded notion of 'literacy'. At its core are the basic higher-order critical thinking skills – e.g. knowing how to identify key concepts, how to make connections between multiple ideas, how to ask pertinent questions, formulate a response, identify fallacies – that form the very foundation of both intellectual freedom and the exercising of full citizenship in a democratic society.⁸

Although media literacy is not yet a permanent fixture within school curricula, there has been rapid growth in the media literacy movement around the US, Canada, Australia and Europe in recent years. In Europe it is especially the United Kingdom that has developed educational models for media literacy.

So, the question is: how can we make our students 'media literate'? Sometimes it is useful to think about a concept using the opposite idea. The following is a list of ideas developed by the Center of Media Literacy to help explore and understand how media literacy education is different from other literacies, and what are some of the basic elements of a more comprehensive media

⁷ <http://www.amlainfo.org/>

⁸ *CML MediaLit Kit Orientation Guide*, Center for Media Literacy, www.medialit.org, p.1.

education.

- Media 'bashing' is NOT media literacy, however media literacy sometimes involves *criticizing the media*.
- Merely producing media is NOT media literacy, although media literacy should include *media production*.
- Just teaching with videos or CDROMs or other mediated content is NOT media literacy; one must also *teach about media*.
- Simply looking for political agendas, stereotypes or misrepresentations is NOT media literacy; there should also be an *exploration* of the systems making those representations appear "normal."
- Looking at a media message or a mediated experience from just one perspective is NOT media literacy because media should be examined from *multiple positions*.
- Media Literacy does NOT mean "don't watch;" it means "*watch carefully, think critically*."⁹

3. Educational models: a broad concept

When we talk about educational models, we should, again, clarify some concepts first. Several ideas lie behind the expression 'educational model', and sometimes the same concept is even used to express different ideas. So, what do we mean by 'educational model' in this paper?

⁹ See *Renee Hobbs, Chris Worsnop, Neil Andersen, Jeff Share and Scott Sullivan*. 2002-2003 at: Center for Media Literacy: www.medialit.org

3.1. Learning with models

Generally speaking, learning with models could be understood in a literal way, that is, from physical models (for example, a topographic miniature), to behavioural models, which are used by trainers to generate behaviours or facilitate the acquisition of knowledge among students. The basic principle here is *learning with models*: taking good examples and learning by imitation. Why models? Imitation of a model is one of the most important sources of learning for the human being: from a very young age we repeat what we hear and see, in language, food, cultural perceptions etc...

The model that we will present here does *not* have the underlying idea of learning by imitation as to media literacy, although it is meant as a source (by 'imitation') for other trainers and leaders who want to use it in their practice.

3.2. Teaching according to models

An educational model is also often understood as a detailed description of a particular process or method that has to be followed in order to teach concepts or skills: the aims, resources, strategies, evaluation criteria etc.... This kind of methodological description is a 'didactic model', rather than the educational model that we are looking for. However, in our model, some of these 'didactic' elements will be used as a guideline, as suggestions for strategies and resources that can be used in media literacy education.

3.3. Educational paradigms: practical applications of learning psychology theories.

The most frequent interpretation of 'educational model' is the one that refers to a *way of understanding education*. In this case, the model refers to the foundations on which we base our way of teaching, of looking at education, and

not to the particular aspects of the way it is formalized. This is the concept handled for the educational model in this paper, in the sense that it provides a theoretical framework, a basis for the aims, strategies, activities and evaluation system for media literacy in higher education.

4. Educational model for Media Literacy in higher education. Case: Universitat de Barcelona, Spain.

The model that will be presented in this paper is based on some of the following aspects, which can be found in the literature about educational models.

4.1. Foundations of the model

4.1.1. Constructivism and learning

Constructivism is a term used to represent a collection of theories based on the idea that *individuals actively construct knowledge by working to solve problems*. While the name is relatively recent, many of the ideas that make up constructivism have been around for some time. In 1896, John Dewey established a ‘Laboratory School’ to test his educational theories and ideas based on constructivist principles. This was in sharp contrast to the behavioural paradigm at that time.

Discovery learning (Jerome Bruner, 1966), *reception learning* (David Ausubel, 1968), and *assisted learning* or *scaffolding* (Lev Vygotsky), are three instructional models based on constructivist principles. As such, they are based on a top-down processing approach to learning, where students are actively involved and utilize prior knowledge. They also assume that knowledge continually changes as old information becomes outmoded. In this top-down approach, students begin with analyzing complex problems and then discover

the basic skills that are required as they go along.

In media literacy, the constructivist theory is an interesting background for planning activities, determine attitudes and strategies during the teaching/learning process, and focussing on certain resources. But most of all, it allows us to look at media literacy as a learning process for both learners and teachers, as reflection and collaborative learning are at its core.

The following are a few of what I consider to be the most useful aspects of the constructivist paradigm in the context of media literacy education.

4.1.2. Project-based learning

Learning and teaching with projects does not mean to choose the easy way. In project-based methods, the problem is that knowledge acquisition is usually slow and results are not immediately visible, due to the fact that learning takes place through *discovery*. However, it allows for *significant learning*, which means long-term learning. David Ausubel makes a distinction between ‘repetitive or memory-based learning’ and ‘significant learning’, the latter being the result of a process where the learner (with or without the help of a teacher) discovers in a personal and autonomous way what has to be learned, for example in a problem solving setting or a particular project that has to be carried out. According to Ausubel, significant learning is more efficient than memory-based learning, as it implies some very important advantages: long-term learning facilitates future learning in similar fields, and allows for profound changes that persist when details are forgotten (Ausubel, Novak and Hanesian 1978).

In media literacy, significant or long-term learning is what we are aiming at: what students need today is to learn how to find what they need to know, and to have the higher order thinking skills to analyze and evaluate whether the

information they find is useful for what they want to know (Center for Media Literacy 2001).

For media literacy education, working with projects has proved to be a good way for acquiring this kind of skills and knowledge, as students experience every step of the learning process themselves in a practical, 'real' way. As to media literacy, working with media is especially interesting in the context of project-based learning. A teacher in a North Carolina secondary school put it this way:

*'I believe this (media literacy) is an area where students must learn to work together in groups and develop common projects. Media allows opportunities for students to plan and complete projects collectively, learning how to value and listen to the ideas of others.'*¹⁰

In the eCLIPse project, we used the very idea of the project itself as a basis: students knew they were expected to present the results of their analysis in a 'real situation': the Media Forum. This project allowed them to keep the work rhythm, and most importantly, to keep focused on their goals as they went along.

4.1.3. Collaborative learning

According to Len Masterman, leading thinker in the international media education movement, Media Education involves *collaborative learning*. It is group focussed. It assumes that individual learning is enhanced not through competition but through access to the insights and resources of the whole group (Masterman 1994).

¹⁰ <http://www.ci.appstate.edu/programs/edmedia/medialit/teachers.html>

Learning in group settings, i.e. cooperative or collaborative learning, has been at the core of constructivist theories in recent years. Our learning becomes more effective when we take advantage of the possibilities created by the interactions between all agents of the learning process, be it a teacher, peer, colleague or specialist. As Lev Vigotsky sustained, outstanding peers can enhance the development of the learner, as an effect of collaboration.

But the most important aspect of group work in the context of media education is that *collaborative learning enhances critical thinking* (Gokhale 1995). According to Johnson and Johnson (1986) there is persuasive evidence that cooperative teams achieve higher levels of thought and retain information longer than students who work quietly as individuals. The shared learning gives students an opportunity to engage in discussion, take responsibility for their own learning, and thus become critical thinkers (Totten, Sills, Digby and Russ, 1991).

In the eCLIPse project, collaborative learning takes place through interaction between peers and between learners and teachers, both on a local level (on-site workshops) and an international level, the Media Forum being the point where students from each university had to present the results of their learning process to the others. The analysis of media, and particularly the analysis and evaluation of portrayal of ethnic minorities and immigrants which students carried out, took place in a context of group work, group reflection and interaction of students-students and students-trainers. During the on-site workshops, several strategies for collaborative learning were used, such as working in small groups to report back to the class and have a new group discussion with the whole class.

In all cases, the interaction took the shape of '*semiotic mediation*' according to Tudge, who identifies language as the most important kind of interaction in urban and industrialized societies (Tudge 1990).

4.1.4. Learning and Critical thinking

As we have seen, an idea that is closely connected - although not necessarily explicitly - to the constructivist theory, is that of the learner as a critical thinker.¹¹ Since in media literacy the skill or 'competence' of critical thinking is crucial, it needs to be explored and defined before it allows us to use it in a model.

During the last years, several kinds of cognitive competences or skills have been proposed that are related to critical thinking. We could summarize them in three categories (Piette 2003):

1. The ability to *analyse* information: formulate questions, define concepts, distinguish the elements of an argument, identify problems and clarify alternative solutions.
2. The ability to *judge the reliability* of the information: judge the credibility of a source, judge the credibility of information, identify implicit prejudice, judge the logical validity of an argument.
3. The ability to *evaluate* information: draw appropriate conclusions, make generalisations, infer meaning, formulate hypotheses, and reformulate an argument, a problem or a situation.

It is obvious that these skills and competences can be applied perfectly to media literacy. Jacques Piette (2003) gives us a few strategies to help learners to develop critical thinking skills, from which we have selected the following for the eCLIPse model:

1. Teaching how to *exercise these competences*: stimulate discussion and the exchange of ideas, ask high level questions, demand answers that

¹¹ An author who has particularly studied the relationship between the principles of constructivism and critical thinking is: Scheurman, Geoffrey. *Using Principles of Constructivism to Promote Reflective Judgment: A Model Lesson*, University of Wisconsin: River Falls.

require an elaborate argumentation, stimulate research, promote collaborative work.

2. Promote *meta-cognitive competences*: how do I learn, which learning strategies work best for me, what is my attitude towards/during learning....
3. Teaching how to *transfer these competences* to real situations.

As we have reached the point where *thinking about learning* seems to become inevitable, there is one last point that we cannot forget when talking about media literacy education: the meta-cognitive aspects of learning.

4.2. From meta-cognition to knowledge

We can understand meta-cognition in general terms as *the reflection on the learner's own work*, as a way to improve knowledge acquisition in the future.

Often when dealing with media issues or topics, learners can be intimidated by the complex technological and institutional structures that dominate our media culture. They can feel powerless against the psychological sophistication of advertising messages and pop culture icons. Both of these attitudes towards media – fear and powerlessness or apathy - often lead to a complete rejection of media as such, which does obviously not contribute to learning about media. Here meta-cognition, or knowledge about our learning process, including our attitudes, emotions, or self-concept, can be a guide towards effective learning. (Steffens 2001). In this sense, educational models can be useful, as they provide a pattern that learners and teachers can use, apply or transform according to their needs or the situation.

In the eCLIPse model, the meta-cognitive aspects lie in the fact that students not only analyzed and evaluated media, but also had to think about their analysis, write down their reflections, and share their experiences and insights

with students from the other universities at the Media Forum. This allowed them to compare their work with the other students' and think about the differences and similarities between them. Thus, during the forum, two essential aspects of media literacy came together: the *cognitive processes* (learning about media) and *meta-cognitive processes* (learning about learning).

So it became clear to us that each of the steps in the process of learning about media had to be controlled or 'validated' by meta-cognitive mechanisms that allowed for reflection:

- *Analysis of the new acquired knowledge*
- *Reflection on the learning process*
- *Application of the new knowledge*
- *(Reflection)*

These steps can be applied both for learning and for teaching.

Because media literacy education is an emerging discipline academically, there are no established criteria (yet) for teacher training. What follows is an attempt to provide teachers and learners in higher education with a model they can use, apply, transform or build upon for further research in this field.

4.3. Educational model for the eCLIPse project: portrayal of ethnic minorities and immigrants in the media.

As well as being able to "decode" the symbols that dominate their society, students should be able to "encode" them. Just as we must integrate writing with the development of reading skills, we should integrate formal media *analysis* with media *production*. The output model of the eCLIPse project clearly mentions these two dimensions of literacy: the 'reading' (analysis) and the 'writing' (production) part. However, since the project is only half through, at this moment we can only provide the output for the first part, the analysis.

Participants in the eCLIPse project analysed the way media, and especially news features, *(re)present, portray, depict ethnic minorities and immigrants*.. It is a known fact that the representation of minority groups constructed by the media plays a very important role, not only in the perception the public has of these people, but also in the very perception they have about themselves, their self-esteem and their aspirations (Shepherd 2003).¹² Most importantly, the imagery of television news may contribute to racism and discrimination through promotion of various stereotypes (Campbell 1995). Both positive and negative representations in media may reflect ideology and attempts to encode meanings for audience members (McQuail 2000). Thus, the question is: what are these meanings and who are the audiences?

It would be silly in media education to pretend that ideologies did not exist or that they did not influence the media. It would, perhaps, be criminal. Ignoring ideology is no better than pushing a single ideology. The only tenable stance towards ideology is one that helps students *identify ideological influences in their media*, clarify their own ideological beliefs, and come to terms with the way that ideologies operate within the media.¹³

So the general questions that we kept on asking throughout the project were:

1. How do we judge the relationship between the representation that the media offer of people, places and events, and their existence in the 'real world'?
2. Who is included in the representations of the media?
3. Who is not included?
4. Why? What/who is behind the message?

¹² Shepherd, Rick (2003). Contenidos y conceptos en una educación en medios, in: Roxana Murdochowicz (Coord.), *Comunicación, medios y educación*, Barcelona, Ediciones Octaedro, p. 103.

¹³ Worsnop, Chris. (2003). *Orthodoxy is the Enemy: Four Ways NOT to Teach Media Literacy*. Center for Media Literacy. www.medialit.org

The model that we are here presenting is a combination of pre-set stages, strategies, resources and evaluation criteria on one hand (*a priori*), and the real experience of the project on the other (*a posteriori*).

The 'pre-set' elements of the model are a synthesis of the literature about the subject and of existing models. Thus, from the very start, the trainers/tutors in the project established a number of stages, strategies, resources, activities and evaluation criteria that would be used in all four universities, so that afterwards we would be able to compare our experiences and create a new model.¹⁴

For our subject, the representation of ethnic minorities and immigrants in the media, we considered four crucial stages:

1. **Awareness:** make students aware of media messages and the stereotypes that are implicit to them
2. **Analysis:** give students tools to analyse the media message, both in its contents and its form, to detect the stereotypes
3. **Evaluation:** give students tools to think critically about the media message, and ask questions about its form, contents, context and consequences, to 'demask' the stereotypes
4. **Production:** enable students to produce and distribute media messages themselves.

Let us have a more detailed look at these four stages.

4.3.1. Awareness

First of all, at the start of the project, we needed to give the participating students a general context to introduce them to the topic. The first step was to make them aware of the fact that the media re-present (groups of) people, and that an ideology lies behind the way they represent them. Some of the trainers gave a session with some background on the subject of racism and

¹⁴ See <http://tv-lmi.ub.es/eclipse/>

xenophobia, and how these ideologies can influence the representation of ethnic minorities, so that students would have an idea of the context (University of Cologne). Others explored the phenomenon of ‘stereotypes’ and the way they influence our image of ‘the other’ (University of Barcelona). Some trainers analyzed a few news items themselves as an example and displayed them to the class as a starting point (University of Gent).

We all used the following document as a guideline for our first sessions:¹⁵

1. Introductory session(s) with students

- Presentation of the context of the project
- Discussion on “racism, xenophobia and cultural prejudices”, based on general and theoretical facts and figures and worked out in the concrete context of the own country (prepared by teacher)
- Orientation towards the issue that you want to work on with the students
- What could be the role of the media (in the broad sense) in relation to this issue

Students’ work:

- make a report of this session(s)
- prepare concrete research propositions for the next meeting of the group

2. What are you going to analyse in what kind of media and why?

Decisions have to be made on whether you want to get an overview of how a phenomenon is shown in a certain medium (or different media) in a certain period (in this case you need a representative sample and quantitative analysis techniques), or whether you are going to look at

¹⁵ Document provided by Frieda Saeys, University of Gent, Belgium.

something specific in depth (in this case you need one or more good cases to be analysed with qualitative methods).

Ask the students:

- to look thoroughly and critical, in small groups, at e.g. certain tv programmes, websites or whatever you designed as interesting for your workshop, as a first exploration, and then
- plan a more systematic screening
 - o lots of texts in case the aim is rather deductive: you can take one format during a week as a sample, or prime time during a couple of days, or work with constructed week, which is more representative... and look at who is in the text, how represented, does he/she speak for themselves, position of the camera etc. I would recommend to design a simple coding grid for that kind of analysis.
 - o one or some well chosen cases when the aim is more inductive, interpretative: only the information on a certain subject, or only the messages where a certain kind of minorities are shown, or only look for special effects made by camerawork or for demagogy in the discourse... but then you only have conclusions for that (kind of) cases (formats,...) you can not generalise or say anything on how important your results are for the medium (media) in general.

Students' work: make a report which contains all the decisions made on materials (who will gather what, who will do what)... and on methodology (are there coding grids to be made in advance, what about definition of units and variables...)

4.3.2. Analysis

In the analysis stage, teachers give students *tools for analysing a media message* in all its aspects: technical, formal, contents and meta-data (who made this message, who paid for it, who is it directed to, how are people depicted...). In the case of the eCLIPse project, the learning process in this stage was enhanced by a workshop, a crucial activity for the analysis stage. Students brought some news items that they thought could be interesting for analysis. They worked in small groups to discuss the items, select the most significant example, and then reported back to the class.

Structure of the workshop at the University of Barcelona:

- **Participation:** 24 students, 3 coaches, 1 technician

- **Physical set-up:** large tables with 6 VCRs and 6 monitors (6 groups of 4 students), beamer and projection screen.

- **Workshop stages:**

1. **General introduction** - Media and stereotypes, the role of the media in confirmation of stereotypes, samples of fiction and non-fiction programmes.

2. **Methodology:** some short methodological aspects (qualitative vs. quantitative methods, complementarity)

3. **Distribution of groups:** 5 groups of 4-6 students were formed. The task was to select one fragment of all selected fragments

4. **Discussion in small groups about fragments** - selection of one fragment, the most significant

5. **Presentation of selected fragment and class discussion** – the

students discussed about the reasons why they thought the selected fragment was the most significant.

As to the technical analysis of the media, students used the following elements as analysis tools:

- *use of the camera* (viewpoint, movement, kind of shots)
- *lighting*
- *effects*
- *colours and shapes*
- *narration*
- *rhythm*
- *sound, dialogue and music*
- *general impression*

For the contents analysis, the students were given an existing checklist of questions, especially created for this kind of analysis, which helped them to discuss about the fragments and select the most interesting ones:

Qualitative analysis of tv-news items ¹⁶

I General questions

1. Who was shown in this item?
2. Which role did they have in the item (anchor person, expert, guest, victim, offender, other?)

¹⁶ Questions used for the *European Monitoring Day* by *Mira Media* in the Netherlands (www.miramedia.nl)

3. Of which ethnicity were they?
4. Did they get the chance to speak in the item?

II **Journalistic Quality**

5. Was the topic of the item new or otherwise newsworthy? Why (not)?
6. Were the people interviewed in the item chosen well? For example in terms of community background, expertise, function, etc.?
7. Was the topic approached from different perspectives?
8. Which angles on the topic were highlighted in the item?
9. Was a certain opinion or perspective missing in the item, according to you?

III **Portrayal/representation**

10. Which ethnic group is most visible in this item?
11. Does ethnicity or cultural background play a role of significance in this item?
12. Did this item make clear that there were different opinions and perspectives in the culture or group concerned?
13. Were ethnic groups/communities opposed or contrasted with each other in this item?
14. If so, which groups?
15. Did you see stereotypes about a certain ethnic group in this item?
16. If so, which stereotypes and who presented them (person speaking, interviewer, editor)?
17. How is the society characterised in this item?

IV Personal impressions

18. What did you think was good in this item and what did you like less?
19. Do you feel that the image of certain ethnic groups was affected positively or negatively by this item?
20. What did you feel when you saw this item (e.g. angry, glad, disappointed, etc.)?
21. Is there anything else you would like to mention concerning this item?

4.3.3. Evaluation

In the evaluation stage, students are stimulated to use their critical thinking skills, so that they can *evaluate or 'judge' the media message* within the context. But evaluation also refers to reflection about the very learning processes of the students.

- Evaluating the message

Several strategies and activities were used to judge the representation of ethnic minorities and immigrants in the news, and to decide which clips were the most interesting for the Media Forum.

- *Oral class discussion after workshop*
- *Written class discussion in an on-line Forum*
- *Individual reports about the workshop*
- *Reports for the presentation at the Media Forum*
- *Sharing viewpoints with foreign students at the Media Forum*

The main questions that ran through the evaluation phase were:

- Why is this or that social group depicted this way?
- What is behind it?
- Does this kind of representation contribute to the general idea the audience has about this group? How?
- What is the context of the emitted item: when was it emitted, what channel emitted it, who owns the channel, and therefore, what could be the reason behind this particular representation?
- Would you do it differently? What would you change?

All these activities took place before the Media Forum and were carried out at each university (local groups of students).

The presentations for the Media Forum were created following the same procedure as the learning process itself: context, analysis, evaluation:

1. CONTEXT

- Date, channel, time, format...
- Circumstances

2. ANALYSIS

- Formal/technical aspects
- Contents: what do we see, what is the message...

3. EVALUATION

- conclusions about how people are depicted
- what is *behind* the message?
- why?... (opinions, arguments...)

4. QUESTIONS FOR DEBATE WITH OTHER STUDENTS

Each university followed this structure more or less, so students were able to compare and discuss each other's clips.

- Evaluating the learning process

After the Media Forum, students were asked to reflect on their own learning process during the project. Two strategies were used here:

- *Individual reports about the Media Forum (open structure)*
- *Interview with trainer about their learning process*

The questions that were asked to the students throughout the process, and especially during the oral interview, were the following:: *What do you feel you have learned? What was missing? If you had to start over, what would keep, and what would you do differently? Do you think you will use the acquired knowledge in the future/ in a different context?*

4.3.4. Production

During the second phase of the project, students will be provided with technical competences and their critical thinking skills will be promoted to produce media as 'media literate' people.

4.3.5. The international Media Forum: synthesis moment of awareness, analysis and evaluation. A reflection.

The Media Forum, the event as such, deserves a separate section in this model, as it turned out to be a very useful step in the whole process. The Media Forum was necessary, in that it closed the first phase and it opened the second. In that sense, the Media Forum had a clear 'synthetic' character. Students and tutors came to exchange their experiences of the first phase, their cognitive processes on media: *awareness, analysis, and evaluation.*

As we have seen before, each of these four stages were validated in three steps of meta-cognitive mechanisms: *analysis* of the acquired knowledge, *reflection* about the learning process, *application* of the new knowledge.

We could illustrate the synthesis of this work process with some examples using the following matrix:

	analysis of acquired knowledge	reflection on acquired knowledge	application of acquired knowledge
AWARENESS about media	e.g. What have I learned about media that I had not thought of before? e.g. What have I learned about how media represent immigrants?	e.g. What attitude(s) did I have towards media? e.g. Was I aware of the stereotypes transmitted by media messages?	e.g. How can I start to think critically about media?
ANALYSIS of media messages	e.g. What skills have I acquired to analyse media messages that I did not have before?	e.g. How have I learned to analyse media messages, and what implications does this have?	e.g. How can I use the acquired analysis skills to evaluate media messages?
EVALUATION of media messages	e.g. What skills have I acquired to think critically about media messages? How can I put media messages into a context?	e.g. How have I learned to think critically about media?	e.g. How can I use these critical thinking skills in other contexts in the future?

5. Conclusions

In this paper, I have tried to explore the theoretic and conceptual aspects of media literacy and media literacy education, in order to find a framework for a model of media analysis and media production for higher education. The 'eCLIPse' project proved to be a good basis for an educational model, since it allowed us to work with real students in a real situation. In that sense, eCLIPse is a test case for a model, which we are adapting as we go along, and which will be enriched by the experiences and the results at the end of the project, when we will be able to develop a final model, including the production of media.

This first part of the model, the analysis phase, is based on an experience with the students at the university of Barcelona, and is the result both of decisions taken *a priori*, and reflections *a posteriori*.

The *a priori* elements were taken from the available literature on the topic and consisted basically in a sequence of four phases or aspects: *awareness* about media, *analysis* of media messages, *evaluation* of media messages, and *production* of media. As we went along, we added some elements *a posteriori* which proved to be essential in the process: the meta-cognitive aspects: *analysis* of the acquired knowledge, *reflection* on the learning process, and *application* of the acquired knowledge to a future problem or a different context.

In summary, *media literacy education is a combination of cognitive aspects and meta-cognitive aspects, and this is true for both learners and trainers.*

The theme of the project - the representation of ethnic minorities and immigrants - allowed us to work with a real case, a real situation, but did not keep us from developing a useful model. Having defined it in 'replacable' and/or general terms, the model can be applied to other subjects or different contexts in the future.

Cilia Willem, september 2004

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