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Title: Paradigms and Pedagogies: Watching Media Teaching World-Wide.

Source: <http://www.eca.usp.br/nucleos/nce/pdf/012.pdf> [2004-08-02] University of Southampton 1998.

Publisher: Research and Graduate School of Education.

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Andrew Hart

Paradigms and Pedagogies: Watching Media Teaching World-Wide

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Abstract

This paper outlines an international comparative research project carried out in 6 English-speaking countries in four continents, based on the original *Models of Media Education* project begun in England in 1992 and recently published worldwide by Lawrence Erlbaum as *Teaching the Media: International Perspectives*.¹ It is the first international study in the English-speaking world on how Media is taught to 14-16 year-old students. It contextualises and analyses detailed case teaching methods to enable comparative analysis of Media teaching paradigms and practices in different cultures through structured in-depth interviews and systematic classroom observation.

The research explores different models of Media Education in practice, and illuminates a range of educational concerns, goals and classroom practices in order to define existing models in different countries more precisely and to make them more visible. It provides new perspectives on Media teaching for researchers and practitioners that will help them examine different teaching approaches and reflect on their own practices, with a view to understanding them more fully and enhancing their effectiveness in the classroom. The project identified a number of economic, cultural, social and political variables which seem to encourage or repress the development of Media Education in different national contexts. A rich variety of forms and practices was found within three basic paradigms which have been identified by previous writers and researchers. At the same time, several 'structured absences' were discovered. There was a recurrent lack of attention to: classroom interaction and dialogue about the media; a lack of space for young people's own media experience and knowledge; few opportunities for active involvement in the social production of texts; an Avoidance of teaching in context through engagement with

1 This paper focuses on the main findings of the international *Models of Media Education* project. It is a modified version of a longer paper based on the final chapter of *Teaching the Media: International Perspectives*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, New Jersey. Companion papers on research methodology and problems were presented in Frankfurt in September 1997 at the European Conference on Educational Research within the *International Studies in Secondary Education* strand and at the MEDIA 98 Conference at the Institute of Education, London, in March 1998, which also includes a critique of research on Media Education over the last 25 years. Hart and Benson (1996) also discusses methodological issues in more detail.

media processes and technologies; infrequent engagement with political issues or learning about media institutions. Although school policies and managerial support were found to be important variables, the major factor in determining the teaching processes and strategies of Media teachers seems to be autobiographical and necessarily, therefore, intimately related to their own developing experiences of media.

1. INTRODUCTION

Research on strategies for Media teaching has only just begun. This study is the first international perspective on the teaching of Media to 14-16 year-old students in the English-speaking world. Through detailed case studies of current work in 6 different countries, it enables comparative analysis of various Media teaching paradigms and practices in different cultures within the English-speaking world. All of the studies used the research framework developed in the original *Models of Media Education* project which began in Southampton, England in 1992. Most of them used the structured interview and classroom observation schedules from the Southampton project with a sample of a dozen or so secondary level teachers, but there were some local variations and supplementary data in many cases.

The scope of the study is indicated by the contents-page from the forthcoming book which includes all 6 of the international studies.

Table 1

TEACHING THE MEDIA: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Foreword: The Media Education Revolution (Len Masterman)

1. Introduction: Media Education in the Global Village (Andrew Hart)
2. Models of Media Education in England and the Secondary Curriculum for English (Andrew Hart)
3. Media Education in Northern Ireland (Jude Collins)
4. Media Education in an Emergent Democracy: KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa (Sue Court and Costas Criticos)
5. Media Education in Western Australia (Robyn Quin)
6. Media Literacy in Massachusetts, USA (Renee Hobbs)

7. Media Education in Ontario: Generational Differences in Approach (Robert Morgan)

8. Conclusion: Paradigms Revisited (Andrew Hart)

The project's purpose was not so much evaluative as exploratory and illuminative. It did not seek to offer a comparative evaluation of different paradigms for Media Education or different teaching models in practice, but to explore the diversity of educational concerns, goals and classroom practices. This exploration will help to define existing models in different countries more precisely and to make them more visible. so that readers in different parts of the world will gain new perspectives on Media teaching, examine teaching approaches which differ from their own and reflect on their own practices with a view to understanding them more fully and enhancing their effectiveness in the classroom.

The paper looks at some of the specific issues raised by the different studies in the international project and forward to their implications for the development of effective Media Education on a global scale. In this paper, we can only see a glimpse of the larger studies which we discuss.² We have only just begun to retrieve teachers' sense of their aims and assumptions and the way they structure actual lessons. Even so, we can make some useful and productive comparisons, provided that they are tentative and provisional, pending further research.

The case studies discussed here do not claim to be representative of Media teaching in any of the contexts studied. The research is partial in three senses. Firstly, it is limited in scope, since it reports on a small part of a much larger picture and focuses on a fairly narrow range of work, mainly within the teaching of English. Secondly, it is highly selective, since all the teachers in our samples were chosen to participate because of their known involvement in Media work as a part of their teaching. Thirdly, it is partial because all the contributors to the project are acknowledged advocates of the potential value of Media Education within formal schooling.

2. FOCUS

The original *Models of Media Education* research project in England (Hart and Benson, 1993) explored major questions about aims and methods for Media teaching amongst teachers of English. It uncovered several areas of uncertainty about English\Media³ teaching and identified a range of models which English teachers draw on in the

² All references in this paper, unless otherwise indicated, are to chapters in Hart, A. (Ed.) (1998) *Teaching the Media: International Perspectives*.

classroom at Key Stage 4 (KS4: age 14-16). The project produced detailed descriptions and analyses of a wide range of approaches to teaching about the media.

In England, some clarity and continuity have been achieved through various attempts in recent years to define Media Education within the National Curriculum for English. In this paper, the emergent term 'Media' is used for convenience as a simplified way of referring to both general 'Media Education' in English or across the curriculum and to the more specialized subject 'Media Studies'.

We may soon be able to speak as easily and confidently of 'Media' as we already can of 'English', as is already happening in some schools. Even then, however, we shall need to recognize the wide diversity of practice encompassed under the term, for example in the differing emphases which teachers and courses place on practical as against analytical work.

The only previous work on English\Media teaching methods took place in the early 1970s when the Schools Council funded a pioneering investigation into how schools were responding to the burgeoning media culture around television and pop music, and the ways in which teenagers' involvements in this culture were affecting their commitment to school and their educational performance (Murdock and Phelps, 1973). This large-scale survey found that 80% of teachers in grammar schools and 42% in comprehensive schools sampled felt that the study of the mass media had little or no legitimate claim to classroom attention. The findings were widely used and debated both in Britain and elsewhere, but in the twenty years or so since then, there have been no further detailed large-scale studies.

Table 2: Empirical Research on Secondary Media Education in the UK

FOCUS	METHOD	AUTHOR	PLACE	DATE
Range and frequency surveys	Questionnaire	Murdock & Phelps	England	1973
		Butts	Scotland	1986
		BFI	England	1988
		SFC	Scotland	1991
		BFI	England	1994, 1998

³ This term is used in this paper to refer to teachers who incorporate Media into their English teaching (or, in some cases, into other subjects) as opposed to specialist Media teachers.

Teacher Perspectives	Interview	Murdock & Phelps	England	1973	
		Butts	Scotland	1986	
		Hart	England	1993, 1998	
Classroom Teaching	Reflexive Observational } Interview }	Buckingham		1995	
		Butts	Scotland	1986	
			Brown (DEFT)	England	1990
			BFI	England	1996
Classroom Learning	Reflexive Observational	Hart	England	1993, 1998	
		Buckingham		1998	
			Buckingham	England	1990, 1993
			Hart	England	1993, 1998
Curriculum Contexts	Reflexive } Interview }		England	1994, 1995,	
		Buckingham		1998	
	Documentary	Butts	Scotland	1986	
		Hart	England	1993, 1998	

Since then, the rise of qualitative methods in Media Studies has, however, provided much more detailed and nuanced accounts of children's and teenagers' media experiences and their relation to changing patterns of social division, family structures, everyday life, and personal identity. In the early 1970s the Schools Council undertook a pioneering investigation into how schools were responding to the burgeoning media culture around television and pop music, and the ways in which teenagers' involvements in this culture were affecting their commitment to school and their educational performance (Murdock and Phelps, 1973). This large-scale survey found that 80% of teachers in grammar schools and 42% in comprehensive schools sampled felt that the study of the mass media had little or no legitimate claim to classroom attention. The findings were widely used and debated both in Britain and elsewhere, but in the twenty years or so since then, there have been no further detailed large-scale studies.

As a result of the success of the *Models of Media Education* project in England and contacts with other researchers, a collaborative project was established to develop the research internationally. Participants agreed to use the same methods and instruments as were developed for the original English project, with similar cohorts of students and

teachers, in order to provide a relatively fixed lens through which classroom approaches in different educational and cultural contexts could be observed.⁴

The international project focused on:

- conceptions of Media Education within English teaching
- perceived problems and rewards of teaching and learning about the media
- teachers' attitudes to Media Education both as a theoretical discipline and as a classroom subject
- teachers' aims for their students
- teachers' prior experience of media institutions
- key concepts with which teachers feel most confident and the sources from which their understanding of these concepts derive
- favoured resources and the ways in which these are used
- teachers' expectations for the future of Media Education.

Debates between conflicting views about the media of the future have strongly influenced current thinking about appropriate forms of education. Our research has identified a range of teaching models which will help conceptualise a wide range of practice amongst teachers of English. It shows how classroom strategies and practices in different countries are responding to the new technological developments and ideological debates. By providing two distinct but related sets of data from small samples of English\Media teachers (usually about 10 in each study) on their rationales for teaching Media (from depth interviews) and on their classroom methods (from systematic observation), the study has created a new basis which enables us to begin to:

- document the different understandings, purposes and practices of English\Media teachers in a range of international locations
- enable comparative analysis of different approaches to Media teaching both within different national and between different international locations
- encourage discussion of appropriate models for different locations and purposes
- facilitate discussion of appropriate methodologies for classroom research in Media Education

⁴ A more detailed explanation and discussion of the research methods, instruments and findings of the original project in England has been previously published in *Continuum* 9/2, 1996 pp.146-160

- provide a basis for the continuing development of Media Education as a discipline and for further research in Media Education.

Although they may sometimes appear to, teachers do not function independently of larger controls. What we are able to explore through the lens of comparative analysis is the extent to which national, regional and district cultures and policies impact on local practices. There is a necessary (and desirable) tension between the allocative controls of statutory educational frameworks and the operational controls of individual teachers in their classrooms. The spaces, resources, temporal frames and class sizes they operate within strongly influence, but do not completely determine, their aims and methods. So too with their personal biographies and goals. Our interviews and observations give us insights into some of the complex interactions between cultures, teachers, students, resources, methods and curricular contexts in educational settings.

There are some general similarities of approach but also some sharp differences which demonstrate how important it is to resist the temptation of 'exporting' models of good practice to inappropriate contexts and to reject some of the colonialist assumptions which have deeply affected English teaching around the world during this century. Our findings show, above all, that we need to think globally but to work locally if we are to develop approaches to Media Education which systematically address increasingly powerful 'mediatization' and globalization processes whilst at the same time creating classroom strategies which genuinely reflect the vernacular demands of different cultural contexts. These differences are reassuring, in that they emphasise that the residues of curricular colonialism are not universal. While the Northern Ireland, South African and Australian studies clearly reveal discourses which resonate with echoes of debates about English teaching which began in England, the North American studies show that varied vernacular strategies are developing.

We began by raising some major questions about current practices in Media Education:

1. How are teachers living in the new multimedia world, in their own lives and in their classroom practice? How do they see this world in relation to their personal philosophies of teaching?
2. How are schools responding as institutions? To what extent do school policies recognise the importance of young people's extra-curricular culture?
3. What influences are exerted by national and local curricular authorities? Do current formal curricula encourage engagement with new media technologies?

It is clearly impossible to understand fully the vast complexity of concerns, motivations, aims, strategies and methods which characterise the range of pedagogical approaches analyzed in our research. We can only try to trace some of the patterns and contours which may help us focus on the major issues in a very simplified form. The diagram below is an attempt to represent some of the background factors which have affected, if not determined, the approaches of our teachers and the forms of teaching which they introduced into their classrooms. It may serve as a starting-point and an analytical framework, however crude, for the more detailed comparative analysis which follows. As the discussion proceeds, it will become clear that some of these variables are necessary pre-conditions for systematic teaching about the media, while others are desirable but not vital to its growth. Our research has shown that none of these variables in isolation can be considered sufficient to ensure effective Media teaching.

3. TEACHERS

Our original research question was:

What are English teachers doing when they say they are doing Media Education at Key Stage 4 (ages 14-16) in secondary schools?

In order to try to answer this question, we need to ask:

- who teachers of English\Media are (their experiences, background and training)
- how they see themselves in relation to schools and curricula
- what they say (and think) about Media Education as a discipline
- how they define their own approach to Media Education
- what they actually do when they do Media Education

Most of the Media Education teachers in the international project saw their work as closely related to their own values and their particular purposes in teaching. All agreed that their own teaching was informed by their views about media and society. Only one participant (in Ontario) claims that he teaches Media merely because it is mandatory within the province. In South Africa, teachers who engage with Media Education seem to do so with a sense of its political importance and a conviction about its value. The South African study speaks of the passion and enthusiasm of the teachers in the South African study

and teachers in the other studies often saw themselves as pioneers responding to the challenge of new terrain.

It is powerful evidence of the participants' commitment to Media teaching that teachers were willing to be observed by researchers and to spend a great deal of time in interviews discussing their motives and methods. Yet, as one of the Ontario participants explains, English\Media teachers often lack confidence. They are uncertain and uncomfortable about where they are going and how to get there:

Media Education is really evolving and where Media teachers used to have a certain level of comfort, I really think that those areas don't exist any more. I mean it's difficult now just to teach about genre, just to teach about television, film, the music industry. That doesn't really work. The boundaries are all being blurred now... So I find that a real challenge, to know how to organize and present things for the student so that they can make sense of some of it, because I don't think things are as clear cut as they used to be.

This lack of direction is not solely dependent on the intellectual breadth and diverse demands of Media teaching or even on the uncertainties of teaching in a post-modernist culture. It is something which is felt locally and personally. English\Media teachers often feel isolated and beleaguered by the indifference, suspicion or hostility which sometimes surrounds them. In the United States, with minimal state or district support, English\Media teachers often work alone and in spite of hostility towards their efforts. This sense of isolation and uncertainty may begin to explain some of the structured absences and silences in the range of work which we discovered.⁵

In such challenging circumstances, the support of colleagues and/or management is vital, as several of the studies have noted. In the South African study, 75% of the subjects regularly collaborated with colleagues in Media work, as was also the case in the United States. In England, the strength and confidence of at least one teacher's work, her willingness to listen and respond to her pupils' interventions and to structure Media work around their interests and emergent understandings, seems to be related to the fact that she works in a department which shares and creates its own resources and practices frequent team-teaching.

However, individual experience and training are clearly also important factors in determining the strategies and processes which English\Media teachers use in their work. Nearly all of the teachers in each study were experienced to the extent that they had been

⁵ This uncertainty was so great for some teachers in the USA study that they actually repeated for their observed lessons teaching which had involved the same pupils earlier in the year.

teaching for some time. All of the Western Australian teachers had been teaching for more than 5 years. Over three-quarters of the teachers in England had been teaching for more than 10 years (although 2 others were in their very first year of teaching). In South Africa, the average number of years of teaching experience was nearly 8, with an average of over 5 years for Media teaching. In Ontario, where three different 'generations' of teachers were deliberately selected, the 4 older teachers had between them taught for nearly 100 years!⁶

It is very difficult to establish any consistent patterns in such small samples, but it seems to be the case that younger, less experienced, teachers offered a greater range of Media work and with more confidence than older, more experienced teachers, provided that they either had formal training in Media or Communications Studies or professional experience in the media (or, in some cases, both). The Ontario data go further than this in suggesting that there may be a three-way correlation between 'cultural heritage' approaches, print-orientation in classroom work and older teachers. Conversely, it seems to be the case that the 'post-television generation', who have more experience of electronic media and more recent training, are also more comfortable with critical, 'representational' approaches. We shall need to explore this further in discussing the aims and forms of Media work which our studies have discovered.

3.1 Training

In Western Australia, specialist Media teachers are required to teach English as their second teaching area. In England, there are no such requirements, but the majority of English\Media teachers (at least at KS4) come from a specialist English-teaching background and continue to teach English alongside Media. In fact, most teachers of English\Media in the English-speaking world have an initial qualification in English. As we have seen, this has advantages in terms of the critical approaches teachers of English bring to Media teaching, but it also poses some problems, as we shall see, in terms of the narrow 'textualism' of their focus and some of the aesthetic paraphernalia they may have inherited from the 'cultural heritage' tradition.

Where English\Media teachers have some formal training in Media teaching or some professional experience of media industries, it seems to make a difference. In Northern Ireland, one of the teachers interviewed clearly benefited from the additional experience of

⁶ No data are available for the USA study.

working on the Northern Ireland Curriculum Council Working Party which considered the role of Media in relation to English and another from working as a Media teacher during the 1970s on the old Certificate of Secondary Education. Although we collected data on teachers' gender in all of the studies and found an over-representation of women in England and Northern Ireland which is in line with gender differences within English teaching generally, this seemed not to be an important factor in determining general aims and classroom methods.

Predictably, nearly all of the teachers in each of the studies registered a desire for more and better training. Most of them pointed to the need for both a more systematic theoretical foundation within which they could work and for greater opportunities for practical or professional experience in the media industries. None of the teachers interviewed in Northern Ireland was familiar with basic Media Education pedagogy texts, or had experienced specific training in Media Education: Similarly in England, although Initial and Continuing Education courses for teachers have been provided in a few places (notably London, Nottingham and Southampton) since the 1970s, most English teachers have experienced very little formal training in Media Education. Less than a quarter of the teachers in the original study in England (including the two least experienced ones who were in their first year of teaching) had experienced any extended training in Media Education or Media Studies.

By contrast, in South Africa, where the growth of Media Education has been more recent, all of the teachers interviewed had attended Professional Development courses for teachers and more than half of them had experienced formal training in Media Education. Not surprisingly, these were also the teachers who showed most awareness of basic Media pedagogy books and understanding of 'key concepts'. Nevertheless, the teachers in the sample, chosen through links with Media Education work at the University of Natal, are untypical of South Africa as a whole and there is a great need there for many more formal courses in Media Education for teachers.

In Western Australia, a quarter of the interviewees had experience of Professional Development courses and half were graduates in Communication or Cultural Studies in addition to their common background in Literature Studies. In Ontario, where a province-wide survey of Media teachers was undertaken as background to the case studies reported here, 87% of respondents had experienced no formal preparatory training in

Media Education and even those who had experienced some training often referred to educational technology course rather than Media Education. In the USA, Media teachers are often self-taught, but there is currently some growth in the provision of Professional Development courses, particularly in metropolitan areas. The Billerica and Harvard Institute initiatives are clear examples of this growth. Formal training for teachers in Media Education seems to be a necessary pre-condition for its effective development in classrooms throughout the world. However, training alone is not a sufficient guarantee of such development.

Whilst more and better training at all levels is obviously desirable, we should be cautious in assuming that training alone will necessarily produce effective teaching. In Massachusetts, in spite of their participation in intensive Professional Development through the Harvard and Billerica initiatives, several teachers were confused about their motives, educational goals and classroom methods. They sometimes made references to 'key concepts' in a way which may have looked good on paper, but which were not made operational in the classroom. For example, one teacher's work on newspapers and media violence is located ambivalently between a protectionist stance against pervasive media reportage of violence and formal analysis of generic presentational features. His approach embraces both individual and small group practical work and „soap-box“ declamations about violence. He expects students to discover important concepts and principles about contemporary media through such work, but at the same time admits his complete ignorance of his students' actual newspaper reading habits and expresses dismay that they seem to be reading the wrong things. He seems to think that it is possible for teachers to 'know' about media without knowing their students' media habits, or even their students.⁷ A similar contradiction between valuing students' opinions and responses on the one hand and privileging the teacher's own views on the other, is evident in the work of one of the Australian teachers on films.

There are often contradictions between the various discourses which a single teacher routinely draws on and between these discourses and actual classroom practice. We shall need to come back again to explore more specifically some of the confusions, tensions and contradictions between liberal-progressive notions of 'empowerment' and 'critical

⁷ The confusion of many teachers (in spite of formal training) is also evident from the way in which the observers in the USA study did not seem to know what they are looking for when observing colleagues in the classroom. This was the only one of the studies which used teacher-colleagues as observers rather than researchers but not the systematic observation schedule originally used in England

autonomy' in the classroom and traditional whole-class didactic pedagogies. These are some of the parts of English\Media teaching which training does not reach.

3.2 Institutional and curriculum contexts

The original research project in England explained how English\Media teachers have been supported in the development of their work in the classroom through curriculum guidance and lobbying by national bodies like the British Film Institute (BFI) and independent bodies like Film Education and through formal training in University Education departments. They have also had the benefit of support from within professional bodies like the National Association for the Teaching of English, the (now defunct) Society for Education in Film and Television and the more recent Association for Media Education (AME). A series of statements and guidance on curriculum development and teaching methods has been supplemented by examination frameworks and occasional training from examination boards. Perhaps less well known is the degree to which local informal groupings of teachers meeting regularly to share their problems and expertise have been catalysts in the growth of effective Media work.⁸ More debatable, but equally important, is the role which central government, through the Department for Education and Employment, Her Majesty's Inspectorate, the Schools Curriculum Assessment Authority and previously the National Curriculum Council (responsible for the Cox Report) have played in the formulation of National Curriculum policies, especially for English.

Many of the same forms of institutional support and curriculum demands have contributed to the growth of Media Education in Northern Ireland, as teachers in the study acknowledge. The Northern Ireland version of the Education Reform Act (1988, 1989) set out the curriculum framework and the Northern Ireland Film Council, along with the Northern Ireland Media Association, have provided the kind of support which the BFI and AME have done in England.

In Western Australia, the Screen Education Society, building initially on informal networks of teachers with an interest in film study, helped widen interest in the whole range of media and their relations with education. Sustained formal training, examination

⁸ The *Southampton Media Education Group*, for example, met regularly for ten years until it was consolidated into the *Media Education Centre* at Southampton University in 1996. (Messenger Davies, 1991; Mottershead, 1995)

syllabuses, the School Commission's Innovation Program and Higher Education programs all contributed to an environment favourable to the eventual introduction of mandatory Media Education across the whole continent in the late 1980s. In Ontario, 'Media Literacy' has been mandatory in the secondary curriculum for a decade and the *Media Literacy Resource Guide* (1989), alongside the Association for Media Literacy, have been a strongly influential form of support for Media teachers. In South Africa, Media Education is a crucial element in anti-Apartheid education and, around Durban, the University of Natal has provided a focus of training and support for Media teachers, who are beginning to create informal networks to share their work. But, with 80% of the population of South Africa never having experienced any form of Media Education, this is clearly not yet a national development as in England or Australia.

As with training, however, broad institutional support may be necessary pre-conditions for the growth of effective Media Education but it is not sufficient in itself. In spite of the apparent consensus in Western Australia as to the importance of Media Education and the existence of established syllabuses, none of the teachers in the study made any reference to official syllabuses either to illustrate or justify their approaches to Media teaching. One teacher in Ontario, as noted earlier, only taught Media because it was a requirement.

There is no positive correlation between the spread of media and communication technologies and the growth of understanding about them. Indeed, the correlation may be an inverse one. Even where there is a genuine determination to update school curricula, the pace of technological change continues to outstrip educational responses. It still seems paradoxical, however, that the USA is, on the one hand, the major source of global media messages and a front-runner in technological innovation and, on the other, probably the most underdeveloped English-speaking country in the world as regards Media Education.

Kathleen Tyner, a prominent Media Education developer in the USA, also contrasts the way in which Media Education elsewhere has been mandated by central educational authorities with the piecemeal approach in the USA:

In the United States, where local control is the norm, Media Education has been practised idiosyncratically by dynamic teachers in K - 12 education who include it across the curriculum in fragmented, often isolated efforts that are, by-and-large, marginalized and subject to budgetary caprice. (Tyner, 1996, p. 9)

Robert Kubey has recently carried out research on the apparent obstacles to the growth of Media Education in the USA. and agrees that the USA is „the only major English-speaking country in the world with virtually no formal Media Education in its schools.“ (Kubey, 1991) The reasons for this underdevelopment of Media Education are various. Unlike all of the countries we are comparing, the USA has as yet no formal means of teacher education in Media. The USA is not only large but extremely diverse, with limited central control over educational policy (2.5 million teachers, 15,000 school districts and 50 states). As we have seen, English\Media teachers (like teachers of many other subjects) often work in isolation within their states, unable easily to form professional networks or to access those which do exist and lacking most of the institutional encouragement or support which has developed elsewhere. Any form of educational innovation is therefore difficult. At the same time, it is arguable that countries outside the USA have taken a greater interest in film and television as forms of communication, whether for aesthetic or protectionist reasons. Finally, it may be that one of the keys to the absence of developed forms of Media Education in the USA is the existence of a powerful tradition of ‘prophetic’ denunciation of the media. Such writers as Wilson Key, Jerry Mander, Neil Postman and Marie Winn are well known within the USA (and beyond, as frequent mentions by Ontario teachers show) but nowhere else have they managed virtually to monopolize the Media Education agenda and determine its most dominant discourse. Although the situation is beginning to change and the states of Massachusetts, New Mexico and North Carolina, at least, have formally introduced some Media work, it is almost as if the USA is determined to experience its own ‘Leavisite’ tradition. Whatever the truth of this, it is clear that the major institutional frameworks in operation in the USA have not hitherto been supportive of Media Education and may, in fact, have functioned as negative constraints on its growth.

3.3 School policies and management of English\Media

In England, we found that there is sometimes a clear expectation at departmental level that English\Media work will occur, as mandated by the National Curriculum for English, and there is often discussion and collaboration in the design of units of work which incorporate Media for students at KS4. So, in spite of the fears and uncertainties of some teachers of English about how others (parents, head teachers, school governors) will see their Media work, it is incorporated into the routine work of English departments. It is rare,

however, for Media to be written explicitly into whole-school policies. In Northern Ireland, senior management often take an interest in Media when there is a large investment in equipment (though which causes which is a matter for debate). At the same time, the concern of many teachers of English in Northern Ireland to gain the support of senior managers for their Media work confirms the sense of nervousness and uncertainty about innovation which we referred to earlier. It seems that only in South Africa amongst the places we have investigated was there not only collaboration between teachers in their school but explicit whole-school policies for Media Education: nearly half of the schools in the study either had Media policies or were currently revising them. Such policies may have been the starting-point for teaching about media for some of the South African teachers interviewed.

3.4 Cross-curricular Media work

It is not necessary to have whole-school policies on Media Education for it to be present in other areas of the curriculum than in English. Indeed, the USA study shows clearly that Media work is not confined there to subject English. Where Media Education should be located in school curricula has been a major debate in England and elsewhere. (Hart, 1992; Hart and Hackman, 1995) There is clearly some support for cross-curricular initiatives in England and in Australia. In Northern Ireland, the Education for Mutual Understanding and Cultural Heritage strands of the Crosscurricular Themes required by the National Curriculum seem to be used imaginatively for exploring social and political issues relevant to the communities there by means of media texts, but there is little evidence in England of a desire to incorporate Media work into the Cross-curricular Themes. In the USA, there is debate between supporters of a cross-curricular approach based on literacy competencies and those who would prefer a discipline-based approach to the mass media. Yet there is also the danger in the USA that cross-curricular approaches may evaporate into weak or instrumental forms of Media work or even into educational technology. In Canada, a broad-based Technology Education policy was introduced in 1995. However, it is most likely that English Departments are likely to remain the principal sites for Media Education in all of the contexts we have investigated. This is most likely in South Africa, England, Australia and Northern Ireland where Media Education has been introduced through the medium of the English curriculum. In South Africa, where there is no national policy of Media Education, it has been introduced into

the curriculum through English and has been an optional extra, like Film Studies. The new core curricula are yet to be made public.

Irrespective of the educational politics of curriculum location, there are ample reasons for emphasising the tremendous potential of Media teaching in diverse cultural settings, especially, for example, in South Africa and the USA, where ethnic divisions are key factors. As Kathleen Tyner has argued:

Sophisticated readings of familiar texts, coupled with experiences in media-making, are a powerful tool for teachers...Image-making tools of expression, and video in particular, enable students to refine their own voices, to tell their own stories from an informed perspective and to promote cross-cultural understandings in formats that contribute to shared meaning. (Tyner, 1996, p. 1)

Such a claim raises important issues about practical production and 'voice', which we need to come back to in our analysis of the classroom methods observed in our studies, but it is worth noting here as an additional dimension of cross-curricular work which is often forgotten in such contexts.

3.5 Aims and approaches

We have discussed some of the personal perceptions of teachers which contribute to their motivation towards Media work and we have touched upon some of the larger discourses about culture, society and the media which they draw upon. We need now to relate these apparently individual notions to the general patterns which are already emerging and to the basic theoretical paradigms which were outlined earlier. The basic research question we began with was:

- What Media Education aims are apparent?

Although the precise terms may vary slightly, three basic paradigms are present in the stated aims and preferred approaches of most of the teachers in each of our separate studies.

Table 3: Three Media Education Paradigms

	Title	Major Exponents	Cox Report equivalents (1989)
1	INOCULATORY PROTECTIONIST	Leavis and Thompson (1933)	Cultural heritage

2	DISCRIMINATORY\ POPULAR ARTS	Hall and Whannel (1964)	Personal growth
3	CRITICAL\ REPRESENTATIONAL\ SEMIOLOGICAL		Cultural analysis

The 'inoculatory' paradigm, which seeks to develop discrimination *against* certain kinds of media, corresponds closely to the 'cultural heritage'⁹ approach (England, Western Australia) referred to in the Cox Report (DES, 1989), to 'transmission' education (South Africa) and to 'protectionist' or 'defensive' strategies (Northern Ireland, Ontario, Massachusetts). The 'popular arts' paradigm, which seeks to encourage discrimination *between* media, corresponds to the 'personal growth' model (England, Western Australia) and to the 'Liberal Humanist' approach (South Africa). The 'representational' paradigm, which seeks to address issues of ideology, power and the politics of representation, corresponds to the 'cultural analysis' approach (England, Western Australia, South Africa) and to 'progressive', 'empowerment' and 'oppositional' strategies (South Africa).

These paradigms represent the three major phases in the development of Media Education in the last 50 years, at least in England. Yet all three paradigms remain operational in every educational context which we have investigated. In Ontario, where we have richer biographical data than in the other studies, we can see how the three paradigms roughly correspond to three different 'generations' of teachers and we can see something of the difference which the paradigms make to their classroom practices. Nevertheless, this is not just a matter of the age of teachers, since there are continuing tensions and debates about their appropriateness in every location. There are, for example, clear schisms amongst educators in the USA between protectionist and empowerment paradigms. At the same time, there are arguably many features shared by 'protectionist' and 'representational' paradigms in terms of identifying texts, processes and institutions for particular attention rather than others. Such issues as racism, sexism and exploitation in various forms are central features of both paradigms. The differences, however, are both ideological and pedagogical. Ideologically, the shift is from right-wing to left-wing politics and pedagogically from didacticism to dialogue.

⁹ 'Cultural Heritage' is explicitly incorporated into the National Curriculum for English in Northern Ireland, where it means something quite different.

The province-wide survey in Ontario revealed a quite narrow range of declared teacher aims which are nearly all confined to 'inoculatory' or 'discriminatory' paradigms. Yet in the case studies a wider range of motivations was found. For example, the oldest pair of teachers featured, for whom television was a new phenomenon when they began teaching, show a clear sense of hierarchy in which the older 'cool' media of print and film are superior to the newer 'hot' electronic media and they both have a mission to 'convert' their students away from their current preferences by „teaching against the grain“ and focusing on the aesthetics and ethics of media texts. As Bob Morgan comments:

older media, associated with high cultural capital, appear in a nostalgic, valorized light. In contrast, newer forms appear to be either intriguing... or alien and suspect... Moreover, newer media are utilized and evaluated in terms of criteria appropriate to older media.

Another pair of teachers, representing the next 'generation' of teachers in the Ontario study, share some of the same cool/hot, high/low, print/electronic dichotomies, with the oldest pair, especially in their negativity toward television. The youngest 'generation' of teachers represented, with only 8 years of teaching experience between them, differ in that they do not have a hierarchical sense of media, although one of them remains negative about television. Most important, however, is that they see media not simply as producing texts for consumption, but as forms of expression which are also available to young people. They do not share the same critical/analytical paradigm in their work as older teachers. They incorporate the kind of active production work in their approaches which are envisaged in some of the Ontario curriculum documents of the last ten years, but which few teachers have been able to adopt. As the province-wide survey showed, a willingness to focus on electronic media is still a rare phenomenon in Ontario, where the least addressed media were: compact discs, photography, telephone, computer games, Walkman, Internet and multimedia.

Media Education is not necessarily linked to sophisticated new technologies, but the majority of teachers in all of our studies seemed to be remarkably conservative in their choice of media for study. The print-centredness which often characterises the 'cultural heritage' approach was also evident in the South African study, where over half the teachers expressed a preference for print media as classroom resources, although they also claimed to be happy teaching about electronic media where that was appropriate. The majority of this same group saw themselves as embracing a 'critical' paradigm, but did not always sound convincing in their understanding of what was meant by that. In

Northern Ireland, the 'inoculatory' paradigm seems still to dominate the study of advertising and of newspapers, with occasional references to Vance Packard. Only one classroom in the study focused on the medium of television and 'adult' newspapers were favoured over comics and magazines. Print-centredness was dominant in most of the classes we observed in England and teachers (irrespective of their age) said that they were happier handling traditional printed texts rather than electronic ones.

In Western Australia, we found a range of motives for teaching Media but apparently a more general willingness to engage with a wide range of media forms. English\Media teachers in the Australian study estimated that they spent up to a third of their teaching time on non-print media texts. One teacher embraces the 'cultural heritage' paradigm in treating films much the same as literature, while another's work is based much more on a 'cultural analysis' approach, going beyond texts to examine institutional contexts and ideological formations in a wide range of print and electronic media. In England, some teachers were still treating media texts like literature, others using them instrumentally as a springboard for discussion of social issues, while others tried to encourage young people to engage critically with their own forms of media.

However, none of these findings is intended to suggest more general patterns which may be endemic to particular cultures. In fact, all three paradigms may be traced in almost every English\Media teacher. It is also the case that a teacher may voice allegiance to one particular set of beliefs about the purposes of Media Education but actually contradict them in the classroom. So, before examining in more detail some of the classroom methods which teachers used, we can look briefly and more generally at the role which the three major paradigms seem to play in the approaches the teachers identified as characterising their practice. We can look, in other words, at what they say they are doing before we look at what they are actually doing.

4. TEACHING

4.1 Classroom methods

So now we can look at what teachers actually do when they say they do Media Education, focusing on the original research question:

- What forms of Media Education are apparent?

The main categories used in the systematic observations were: lesson introduction, content items, method (structure/organisation/development), teacher-defined tasks, pupil activities, use of resources and lesson conclusion. Each study tried to demonstrate how these operated in practice and we shall draw on them in the more general analysis which follows.

Some of the work we observed was on the periphery of Media Education as we have defined it and, in some cases, was not Media Education at all, but the use of media texts as a means of pursuing other goals. The international studies found ample evidence of instrumental uses of media both in the way some teachers described their approaches and in their observed classroom strategies. The lesson on the television play *The Boy with the Transistor Radio* may stand as a representative of this kind of work. For all its qualities in terms of pupil participation, dialogue and relevance to their own social situations, the lesson did not even focus on the play as a text, let alone a particular kind of text for the particular medium of television. The question of why such a play was broadcast as part of programming for schools was not even asked. This is a singular use of a media text as a 'resource' but it is echoed in references to "use of media" in History, Drama, Afrikaans and Geography in the South African study.

The related phenomenon of using film and television versions of literary texts in literature teaching is also common, as the BFI/NFER survey of English teachers showed (Dickson, 1994), and as the Northern Ireland study shows, this means that:

The media...act as conduits or vehicles for the delivery of enhanced understanding of literary texts, of more committed and thoughtful writing, of purposeful and enthusiastic listening. Less attention is paid to the ways in which the professional media operate. Such matters as ownership, or organisation, or media audiences, for example, are not highlighted.

However, our focus here is on the lessons which do fall into the category of Media Education as we have defined it. Although the work we have analyzed in each study covers a wide range of media, genres and texts, there are some striking absences, especially in the light of the recurrent themes expressed in teachers' accounts of their intentions. In most cases, the lessons we observed lacked:

- interaction and dialogue (teacher-pupil or pupil-pupil) about media
- space for young people's own media experience and knowledge
- opportunities for active involvement in the social production of texts

- teaching in context through engagement with media processes and technologies
- engagement with political issues
- learning about media institutions

4.2 Interaction and dialogue

Surprisingly, given the claims often made by Media educators to being innovative, none of the lessons observed in any of our studies was conducted in a way which departed radically from standard teaching methods. The 'lesson method', involving a brief introduction by the teacher, followed by informal small group work (sometimes structured by work-sheets), reporting back to the whole class and occasional whole class discussion, was the norm. Most classes observed were dominated by teacher-talk, in spite of widely held perceptions about the inappropriateness of teacher-dominated classrooms in the context of Media Education and sometimes in conflict with what teachers themselves said about the need for pupils to engage critically with their own cultural experience or express their own opinions. In spite of occasional genuflections towards 'readerresponse' theory, individual students rarely had the opportunity to develop their personal response in any depth or to listen to those of others. A surprising number of questions asked by teachers were 'closed' ones, intended to lead to apparently pre-determined destinations. The results of personal research were rarely featured in classes, although there was occasionally some preparatory work designed to feed into lessons in a fairly closed way. If it is important for young people to engage critically and productively with their own media cultures in order to develop 'critical autonomy', the lack of opportunity to do so in English\Media classrooms is problematic, as Kathleen Tyner points out:

Although it is true that Media educators can be successful with a wide range of classroom methods, extreme teacher-centred approaches are in direct conflict with the goal of Media Education to encourage students to think independently. (Tyner, 1995, p. 1)

4.3 Young people's media experience

Media teachers are engaging with three related cultural spheres:

1. the 'official' culture supported by the major public institutions: museums, libraries and, most importantly of all, the formal education system. Schools define what forms of knowledge and expression are to be considered valuable and how they are to be approached and used;

2. the culture produced by the major commercially organised communications, information and leisure industries;
3. the vernacular cultures grounded in the life of particular neighbourhoods and/or social groupings (class, ethnic and religious) which exist on the margins of official and commercial culture.

Most of the Media lessons we observed clearly engaged with (or even helped to perpetuate) the first cultural sphere. Many of them also engaged with the second sphere, that of commercial communication, but usually as texts rather than as institutions. Rarely, however, did the vernacular sphere figure in the classroom. Exponents of a defensive 'cultural heritage' pedagogy have attempted and failed to resolve this problem either high-handedly by exclusion or paternalistically by 'discrimination'. Yet, on the other hand, to recognize and attempt to include such experiences in the classroom is inevitably to change them, since their value often lies precisely in the fact that they are part of a culture which is 'owned' by young people. 'Progressive' pedagogies, drawing theoretically on new approaches to studying audiences which emphasize their activeness and sophistication and recognizing the existing knowledge and skills of students, have often done a disservice to them in an attempt to abolish the cultural and social authority of the teacher. The classroom emphasis is predominantly on spontaneity and informal group work, as against structured activity, planned learning experiences and teacher direction. The danger of this position, as characterised by Bob Ferguson, is that it is:

based around a pedagogy which does not only start with where the student is...but tends to circle that position endlessly...The new pedagogics which accompany too much of the new relationship to the media which teachers and researchers have constructed, are not demanding in the way that students are demanding of their own cultures. (Ferguson, 1996, pp. 62-7)

Given the unsatisfactoriness of both the 'discriminatory' and the 'progressive' positions, how can English\Media teachers address the dilemmas which arise from the necessarily unequal distribution in the classroom of social, political and cultural experience between teachers and learners? Kathleen Tyner neatly sums up this dilemma as like walking a tightrope:

Teacher response to popular culture ranges from trashing it to embracing it. If teachers criticize popular communication forms, they run the risk of alienating and insulting the very culture that students value. If they embrace it, they risk looking like ridiculous fuddy-duddies who are trying too hard to appear up-to-date...In the course of walking this tightrope, it isn't necessary for teachers to suppress personal distaste for popular culture artifacts, or to express glowing enthusiasm for every new pop culture trend. (Tyner, 1995, p.7)

The power of Media Education to be inclusive, to recognize and legitimate vernacular and commercial cultures in addition, rather than in opposition, to the 'official' cultures of schooling, represents an opportunity for intercultural education in situations of cultural diversity. Recognizing the ways in which commercial and vernacular texts are able to cross cultural boundaries effectively, but are then claimed and inflected in different ways by specific cultural and sub-cultural groups is essential to Media Education.

Teachers and media producers see ample evidence that student use of texts goes far beyond the commercial intentions of the media industries...each generation carves out private modes of expression appropriate to prevailing social conditions and purposely keeps the expression coded and veiled to obscure understanding for adults. (Tyner, 1996, p. 5)

Study of this semantic traffic promises to take us beyond narrow forms of textualism. Some of the teachers we observed made explicit references to the importance of young people's own cultural and media experience. In Australia, two teachers clearly expressed this view and attempted to incorporate it in their teaching. As one of them put it:

For a change they can prove they know something. When I am teaching print texts it is always the same. They know nothing and I know everything. At my school they are viewers, not readers and already know a lot about films and television. Media classes give them the chance to demonstrate their knowledge and so I exploit it heavily. The students really tap into it.

Similarly in Ontario, another teacher explained:

We had one presentation on CDs that I learned a great deal from. And this kid knows, as far as I could tell, everything about them, knows how they were developed, knows the technology, knows the future. You know, many of them know far more about certain aspects of that than I.

One of the teachers in England also made space for pupils to bring in their own ideas and preferences about pop music, but all of these examples are exceptional: the norm is much closer to that described in the Northern Ireland study, where teachers rarely acknowledge or draw upon pupils' vernacular cultures as part of their Media lessons.

4.4 Textual production in social contexts

Media production and teaching in social contexts are both strategies which can make the task of Media teachers easier. Specialist Media teachers frequently incorporate such approaches in their work. Yet one of the most surprising absences from Media teaching by the English\ Media teachers whose work we have analyzed is the study of media texts in process or in action in actual social contexts.. Over twenty years ago, the first systematic study of education about the media in English schools strongly advocated the

production by pupils of texts for particular contexts. Pupils' Media assignments, they suggested,

should be produced with a real audience or public in mind...the school, or even better, the local neighbourhood. (Murdock and Phelps, 1973, p. 143)

Classrooms are, of course, highly artificial spaces and we should not expect to find actual media interactions occurring in them as in everyday social life. The real absence is the recognition of media as processes, events and institutions which happen in the social world of young people beyond school. Bob Morgan's research in Ontario led him to a similar conclusion about the conservatism of much current Media teaching:

The overall impression one gets from Media classrooms, conferences and educational theory is that the media have become 'texts-to-read', static props in a disciplinary theatre of interpretation. (Morgan, 1996, p. 29)

Although successive technological innovations like Super 8, portable video cameras and VCRs and inexpensive electronic editing have provided an impetus in most countries for the systematic study of media, few teachers in our study routinely incorporated practical work in their teaching. None of the teachers in Australia did so except on rare occasions. A third of the teachers in the English study used practical group work, often involving presentations to the class, in the lessons we observed but this was always work of the planning or story-boarding kind. Much of this absence can be explained by reference to lack of physical resources, access to appropriate facilities or time constraints. However, the arrival of *Channel 1* in Massachusetts, for example, has meant access to classroom hardware which would not otherwise have been available. The fact that technology is valued so highly in the USA also means that technology can be used as a 'gateway' for students' production to demonstrate how Media Education can enhance literacy, engage community interest and promote "participatory citizenship." (Tyner, 1995, p. 2) There is a strong argument that media production can offer

an opportunity for experiential, collaborative, problem-solving that enhances media analysis skills. Media-making also takes a refreshing approach to media representation...it offers a space for students to define and redefine their own 'problems' with media and to explore their relationship with media. (Tyner, 1996, p. 12)

In particular, the opportunity offered by video production for young people to present their own experience can broaden their understanding of media forms and give them more confidence and competence in discussing representational codes, conventions and discourses. The notion of 'voice', common in teaching about imaginative writing, is central

here. It means, of course, being able to articulate ideas in a public forum, being able to speak and write, as well as listen and read. It means being heard, gaining access to public space for communication. It means having something of substance to say. It means developing a characteristic style which distinguishes the speaker in particular communicative contexts.

There is nothing here which is not formally acknowledged by the English Cox Report as necessary for a fully developed English curriculum, nor by North American notions of 'Media Literacy'. Even a narrow literacy skills-based notion of Media Education recognizes the importance of utterance as well as reception. It is a critical aspect of citizenship education, even though its political consequences may not be fully acknowledged in either the 'adult needs' or 'personal growth' approaches to English teaching as described by Cox. (DES, 1989, 2.21, 2.23). The problem is not acknowledging its importance but putting it into practice in classrooms.

Teaching in context encourages students to operate with confidence through guided practice in structured learning situations, so that they can "interpret their own experiences and make sense of their own learning" in a flexible way. Some of the work reported in the DEFT project (Brown, 1990) successfully follows this pattern of 'cognitive apprenticeship'. (Tyner, 1996, p. 6) Given that field-trips form an important aspect of the curriculum in such subjects as Geography, it is astonishing that, in a world saturated with media products and institutions, so few teachers interviewed and lessons observed made any reference to contact with actual media organisations or functions. At the same time, apart from one teacher in Australia using the Internet as a means of acquiring information, there is little reference by the teachers we interviewed to the newest forms of digital communication.

The English\Media teacher of the future who recognizes the need to be in touch with the vernacular cultures of young people will need to incorporate information technology, in all its forms, in a curriculum which goes beyond embracing the traditional 'mass media' and which is not distracted by the inherent fascination of new technologies without reference to their ownership and sociopolitical functions. This will mean going beyond both the existing Media curriculum and the currently instrumental role of digital technologies in education as expressive tools. It will mean critical examination of software developments and information exchange and even employment patterns on a global scale. As Bob Ferguson argues, the new Media educator will need to "develop a viable and ongoing

engagement with the evolution of new technologies as industries, and with the ways in which multimedia approaches are being utilized for educational and other purposes.”

(Ferguson, 1996, p. 68)¹⁰

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For the Media educator, the new digital information and communication technologies will need to be seen as more than simply information sources (eg. Internet downloading) or as writing resources (for individual and collaborative drafting, editing and, formatting and presentation of texts and for multimedia authoring) or even as a publishing forum (eg. uploading to the Internet) and means of interacting and exchanging ideas by networking and conferencing. They will need to be seen as objects of critical study in their own right. This means studying and understanding their operation and potential not only in the classroom, but also in terms of the ‘global village’ of information exchange and communicative commerce.

4.6 Political issues

Politics is hardly separable from technology. But, in the more conventional arenas of political activity, the studies in both the Northern Ireland and South Africa show teachers at work in highly conflictual and frequently violent contexts. In Northern Ireland, many teachers seem cautious on politically sensitive areas, even to the extent of not using local newspapers for study. In South Africa, on the other hand, possibly because the ‘revolution’ is over, Media Education was perceived as having a real potential to dismantle the legacy of Apartheid. Elsewhere, political issues and even more general issues of power in society seemed to be systematically avoided. Partly, this is the result of the

¹⁰ Bob Ferguson developed his argument for incorporating consideration of the power of digital technology within Media Education in a paper presented at La Coruna in 1996, *Technology, Multiculturalism and Media Education*.

dominant forms of textualism which we have noted, but it is also related to the kinds of text chosen and the particular emphases of teachers on the personal. For example, in England, the lesson on *The Boy with the Transistor Radio* did not relate individual concerns with un/employment to wider political issues. Perhaps English\Media teachers do not feel able to explore the more general issues of power which media texts so often raise. They certainly focus only rarely on the institutional contexts of media production and, in one case reported from South Africa, consciously exclude such concerns.

4.7 Media institutions

Institutions like schools or broadcasting organizations are recognizable by the changing forms and norms which they establish over time. They demand certain kinds of discourses, values, professional allegiances and practices which are often made visible in the way that they speak about themselves publicly through job advertisements, information packs and annual reports. Study of media institutions is especially significant because it is an area in which young people are most inexperienced and in most need of learning from adults who may have such experience. It involves asking questions like „What is this text for?“ rather than „What is it like?“, „How was it made and how does it work?“ rather than simply „What does it mean?“ and „What are its values?“ rather than „What is its value?“ (Branston, 1984, 1987) It means looking for the unexpected and for uncertainties in the ways in which media organizations operate, rather than seeing them as monolithic structures which may be encompassed in thinking about the media as singular than plural. Unfortunately, it seems to be an area in which many English\Media teachers are also most inexperienced. The habit of ignoring or avoiding production, financial and institutional contexts in the study of advertising noted in the Northern Ireland study is surprisingly widespread.

What was notable by its absence throughout all the lessons observed was attention to the way advertising relates to a wider social/political system in a consumer society. Equally, there was little attention to the relationship between programme-making and advertisements, or how advertisements relate to programme-funding. For the most part, work on advertisements tended to ignore context, focusing largely on what was in front of the pupils, considering examples of stereotyping, emotive language and a general concern to deceive.

It may be that the influence of the BFI's 'Signpost Questions' on English teachers in England and Northern Ireland bears some responsibility here. Although the questions provide key concepts which are clear and flexible, the framework does not explicitly include study of institutions. It therefore risks downgrading the importance of power

relationships in the production, distribution and consumption of media texts. The separation of 'Agency' and 'Production' into distinct categories is in danger of de-socializing and de-politicizing media processes. This is hardly surprising, since the 'Signpost Questions' are very much a compromise produced from a long process of consultation and discussion with teachers. They are an attempt to provide a consensual framework with which most teachers would be comfortable. But their blandness is a potential weakness. So too with the BFI's widely quoted definition of Media Education, as reproduced in the Cox Report:

Media Education...seeks to increase children's critical understanding of the media... [It] aims to develop systematically children's critical and creative powers through analysis and production of media artefacts... Media Education aims to create more active and critical media users who will demand, and could contribute to, a greater range and diversity of media products. (DES, 1989, 9.6)

But, as Bob Ferguson complains:

It is a definition which astutely avoids any contact with the political. There is no mention in it of a term like 'society', nor of the exercise of power in and through the media...We are thus left with an approach to pedagogy and Media Education which is sadly emasculated. (Ferguson, 1996, p. 66)

The original English study suggests, in referring to the habit of „institutional acquiescence“, that Media teaching within English may only focus on institutional procedures and professional practices as something to be imitated and emulated, rather than critically examined. Only one of the eleven lessons observed in the English study was concerned with exploring about the industrial context of the texts analyzed. Bob Morgan detects an avoidance of the „collective, impersonal dimensions of media production, as well as the dynamics of media appropriation“ amongst teachers in Ontario. The Australian study shows how, in a lesson on *Gallipoli*, the teacher avoided institutional questions related to ownership, promotion and distribution. As Robyn Quin comments:

Wider issues about cross-media ownership, marketing and power relations are not included in the syllabus and considered by most teachers to be inappropriate to Media Education in the English classroom.

Barrie McMahon also claims that Media Education in Australia characteristically avoids “political economy questions about media: questions of ownership and control, questions of policy and questions of access equity.” (McMahon, 1996, p. 166) This is a crucial failure in the light of the increasing privatisation of Media Education resources, as media organizations set about colonizing the curriculum with 'free', glossy materials for

classroom use and teachers deprived of adequate resources and training eagerly drink from the poisoned chalice of sponsorship. Instead of allowing new marketing strategies to define and narrow the Media Education agenda, teachers with an understanding of institutions might be expected to incorporate the study of marketing into the Media curriculum. Otherwise the sphere of 'commercial' culture we referred to above is likely to dominate not only the 'official' but also the 'vernacular' culture.

Our research confirms rather disturbingly the conclusion reached by Bob Ferguson about current Media teaching in England:

For both teachers and those concerned with the preparation of teachers, there seems to be little mileage in a pedagogy which is concerned with identifying in specific ways the operations of power and subordination in societies. (Ferguson, 1996, p. 64)

5. THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIA EDUCATION

This research shows that both the general cultural contexts of media power and access on the one hand and, on the other, the perceptions of educators, administrators and social commentators of the media's importance in shaping values and social competencies are crucial to decisions about curriculum direction. The discourses which emerge from tensions around 'mediatization' provide many of the philosophical and educational justifications used by English\Media teachers for including Media Education in their work and determine the particular accents and emphases of their classroom pedagogies. Their confidence and competence in the classroom are also partially determined by their experience of and access to training and to local support networks, curriculum materials and critical\theoretical literature. School policies, the support of colleagues, appropriate facilities and resources offer a framework within which larger socio-cultural forces operate locally. But the major factor in determining the teaching processes and strategies of English\Media teachers seems to be autobiographical and necessarily, therefore, intimately related to their own developing experiences of media. This is most obviously the case in relation to interactive teaching strategies, teaching in context and incorporation of practical production work in the classroom.

The research suggests that teachers who operate within a 'popular arts' or 'representational' paradigm are more likely to be comfortable with these interactive, contextual and practical approaches than those working within an 'inoculatory' one. Indeed, there is an ironic symmetry between the belief of some teachers in the

manipulative power of media and their vain hope that didactic, teacher-centred pedagogies can make any difference to what young people think and feel about the media. On the other hand, teachers who see the media as significant and powerful ideological forces which systematically represent the world and specific values to particular social and cultural groups with their own semantic power as interpretive communities, often adopt more pupil-centred approaches and find a place for pupils' extra-curricular media experience and knowledge. As has been suggested, Media Education examines both the way we make sense of the world and the way others make sense of the world for us. (Prinsloo and Criticos [Eds.], 1991, p.20) But our research shows a dominant concern amongst English teachers with the first part of this definition at the expense of the second. English teachers are consistently more concerned with individual perception, language forms and responses than with social interactions, institutions, technology and production.

What precisely determines the basic operational paradigms of English\Media teachers is open to debate, but it seems that the crucial factors are autobiographical. Training and formal policies may make an impact on teachers' motivations, but only indirectly: they may be necessary factors but they are not sufficient. Ultimately, the pre-disposition of teachers and their motivation, when properly resourced physically, culturally and intellectually, seem to be the major factors in involvement in Media Education. Its long-term development on a scale commensurate with the globalization of media processes and institutions depends on such individual experience and commitment.

We have already pointed to many of the elements which are likely to be important to the Media Education of the future. As Len Masterman has put it:

...successful Media Education involves an empowerment of learners essential to the creation and sustaining of an active democracy and of a public which is not easily manipulable but whose opinion counts on media issues because it is critically informed and capable of making its own independent judgements. (Masterman, 1991, p. 4)

Summarizing a more detailed description of Media Education in Europe in the 1990s, he focuses on three essential elements which relate closely to human rights (Masterman, 1996, p. 75). These elements may act as the criteria by which the Media Education of the future will be judged:

- A Commitment to Democratic Values

- A Negotiated Curriculum
- Fostering Critical Autonomy

All three elements are present in emergent forms in much of the work we have examined in our research. Although a great deal of the classroom work analyzed here was based on a fairly narrow range of possibilities and is basically conservative, there is a recognition by most of the teachers of the need to move forward and develop new curricula and teaching strategies which are more appropriate to the needs of Twenty-first Century citizens. Such a project was envisaged by the recent Declaration of the World Council for Media Education at La Coruna:

The declaration of the *World Council for Media Education* at its inaugural meeting in La Coruna in 1996 suggested how, as educators, we might move beyond some of the limitations of current approaches to Media teaching by responding to the increasingly complex demands of information and communication technologies and ensuring that the potential of new technology can be more fully used and understood:

The development and application of new information and communication technologies now offer us opportunities for informal educational processes which work in parallel with the existing formal structures of schooling. But they may also work in tension or in conflict with conventional education.

It is therefore vital that we become literate and competent users of the media, so that we may understand and benefit from them. This involves education about the variety of content, forms and methods of the media. Educated citizens of the 21st Century should be able to use media in a critical and confident way.

Achieving this goal on a global basis requires the development of Media Education strategies which will be appropriate and effective in different cultural contexts. The increasing globalization of information and communication media makes it important that Media Education should encourage individual autonomy and strengthen democratic procedures throughout the world.

Education has a lot of catching up to do before it can begin to match the adaptability and dynamism which characterises the information and communication industries. This will not happen simply by treating the new digital technologies as educational toys or tools. It will entail new forms of training for teachers which will develop a willingness to embrace new curricula and methods in the classroom that are based on more positive and explicit links with the actual social and cultural experiences of young people.

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