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THESES SUMMARY

Neag Annamária
Media Literacy in the Hungarian Educational Policy Arena (1995-2012)
Ph.D. dissertation

Supervisor:

Katalin Lustyik Ph.D
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Institute of Behavioural Sciences and Communication Theory

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1. Rationale and aims of the study

Nowadays media, and moreover new media, offer a vast array of content and new opportunities for entertainment, learning, and production. Along the same lines, research studies highlight that there is a gradually earlier appearance of „child culture" (Lange, 2015), in which the link between socialization, everyday life and interaction with the media is unmistakable. In these conditions, it is imperative to know what resources are available for children to critically understand and actively produce mediated content. Media literacy, as a skill to understand the media, was first implied in a 1962 BBC Handbook (Wallis, 2014). Today media literacy is generally understood as a set of abilities to access, understand, critically engage and produce media.

In this dissertation, I was interested in understanding and presenting the position of media literacy in Hungarian education policy, the interesting historical path of media literacy education in Hungary, and the roles of various actors in the development of media literacy education. The research project had three major questions: **How and why did media literacy education in Hungary make its way into the public education system during the 1990s? In what ways did this area of study evolve over time? What is the position of media literacy education in the contemporary education system in Hungary?** Subsequently, some other questions have also arisen: Who were the key actors involved in the development of media literacy education, what were their motivations, and how did they come to define and influence media literacy education in Hungary? For finding the answers to these questions, the dissertation is set out to provide a historical account of the origins of media literacy education in Hungary, the discourses that have shaped educational policy, and the roles of the various actors involved in this process. The relevance of this quest, however, goes beyond the policy history of media literacy education, since as Parry observes, „[...] disputes over the content of curriculum have repeatedly reflected broader political and social concerns, even when portrayed as purely educational issues" (1999, p. 23). The more overarching aim of this dissertation is thus to also present contemporary concerns in connection with mass media and education.

While this project focuses on media literacy education in public education, children or teachers were not involved in this project. It is equally important to stress that this thesis deals with education policies in connection with *teaching about the media*, rather than the use of media as teaching material (*teaching with media*, or educational media). Also, the thesis does not aim to engage in a debate about the possible effects of the mass media on children.

The goal is to examine how media literacy education was introduced, and how this subject evolved in the Hungarian educational policy arena. There are important questions that are not discussed in this dissertation, but should be addressed by future research. Among these, is how media literacy education actually takes place in the classroom, and how pupils become media literate. These research lines will be explored in the final part of the summary.

This dissertation is unique for several reasons. First, it is one of the first projects within the field of media literacy in Hungary. According to the online database of the National Library of Hungary there are less than ten works that specifically focus on media literacy education in Hungary (Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, 2016). While there are several works that deal with children and the media, to this day, there have been only two Ph.D. dissertations written in the field of media literacy, according to the repository of the Hungarian Doctoral Council (Országos Doktori Tanács, 2016). Second, there is very little academic research available in English devoted to the in-depth study of media literacy in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Even though there were some European Union-funded international projects that had a CEE component, these could not present the fine detail of the current situation of media literacy education in Hungary. Third, this research is also distinct in the sense that it aims to be a multidisciplinary work developed at the crossroads of media and communication studies, policy studies and pedagogical studies. In addition to this, it uses a novel methodology (interpretive policy analysis) in order to shed light over the path of media literacy education in education policy.

2. Literature review

2.1. Insights from the Hungarian literature

Media literacy education as a formal school subject has been in the National Core Curriculum only since 1995, and thus Hungarian scholarly interest on the topic was fairly low. However, Hungarian researchers participated in a number of international comparative research projects that analyzed educational policies and teacher training in this field.

One of the firsts to discuss media education was Imre Szíjártó (2007) who identified five periods of Hungarian media education from 1957 until 1996. He writes that media first appeared in schools in 1957 with the foundation of the first film clubs. The next period was defined by the national curriculum of 1965 in which film aesthetics was included in Hungarian language and literature curriculum. According to Szíjártó (2007) the third period lasted from 1978 to 1980 during which time the curriculum became less and less important,

and aesthetics disappeared from the classroom. The forth section lasted from 1980 to 1995, a period of experiments and alternative teaching. The last period identified by Szíjártó started in 1996 with the introduction of the elective media class (*Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education*) into the national curriculum.

Imre Szíjártó also participated in the *Euromedia* comparative project that presented an international perspective of teaching media to 14-16 year-olds in Europe (Hart and Süss, 2002). The project revealed - through teacher interviews and classroom observation- that in Hungary there was a gradual shift from an aesthetic approach to a social science approach in media education. The report emphasized a number of difficulties such as the problem of teacher training.

Research on media education was taken up ten years later, when Csilla Herczog and Réka Racskó (2012) investigated Hungarian teenagers' media literacy skills. The researchers focused on teenagers aged 14 to 18 and they measured media literacy knowledge through quantitative methods on a sample of 2954 pupils. The quantitative results were then corroborated with qualitative findings gathered from classroom observation, interviews, focus groups and narrative analysis. The researchers found that there is limited interaction during media literacy classes between students and teachers. Moreover the results showed some alarming results: the initial hypothesis (students who had media literacy classes would perform better at the media literacy test), could not be proven entirely (Herczog and Racskó, 2012, p. 11).

Since the 2007 *European Commission Act on Media Literacy*, there is a growing interest in comparing and assessing similarities and differences between the various approaches to media education in the countries of the European Union. Hungary participated in a number of these. One of the latest reports is the *European Media Literacy Education Study* (2014). The main objectives of the study were to develop policy recommendations and to contribute to the harmonization of tools used to measure media literacy skills (Gabinete de Comunicación y Educación, 2014). The country report on Hungary emphasizes the main issues the country faces when it comes to media literacy: the lack of teachers' media training, a stronger focus on ICT education in schools, and the changes in educational policies on media literacy (Gabinete de Comunicación y Educación, 2014).

Another international comparative report, the ANR Translit and COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) *Transforming Audiences/Transforming Societies* published in 2014, analyzes media education through a number of dimensions, such as the

historical background of the subject, the legal/policy framework, the level of teacher training, materials used in classrooms, and funding.

2.2. Insights from the international literature

There is a wealth of studies on the different aspects of the intricate relationship between media and children. Earlier research focused on films and television, while the latter ones, on new media and digital environments. From psychology to sociology or media studies, variate aspects have been analyzed on the topic of children and media. Media literacy scholars form a relatively new and narrow group who are interested in specific aspects of the relationship between children and media. In the following, I will present some of the major research projects in this field.

The OnAir project was aimed at collecting, documenting and developing media education practices in Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, and Romania (Parola and Ranieri, 2011.) The researchers assessed the role of documentation in improving teachers' practical knowledge. The results of the project showed that the documentation of media education practices was inadequate: there was not enough information on instructional practices, and teachers were not reflecting on their educational methods.

Several large-scale studies have been carried out in recent years into the topic of media literacy in Europe. MEDEAnet (2012-2014) was a project supported by the European Commission. In this case, the focus was not just on the status of media literacy, but also on how the media are being used to support teaching and learning in four European countries (Estonia, Greece, Bulgaria and Romania) and three regions (Baden-Württemberg, Flanders, Upper Austria). During this period three reports were issued that had different focuses. The first one analyzed policies, trends and developments related to media literacy and media education. The second annual report (published in 2013) "concentrated on the extent to which media literacy is incorporated into curriculum design for compulsory level education" (MedeaNet, 2013). The report showed that there was discrepancy between the curriculum and the effective daily classroom practice in most countries. The last research report dealt with the topic of training in the production of educational media. The researchers reflected on the importance of high quality teachers and their training as an important component of media education.

Since the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (2007) set out a reporting obligation for the European Commission to measure the level of media literacy in EU states, there has

been a number of studies proposing different methods of measurement. One of the first papers, Study on Assessment Criteria for Media Literacy Levels (EAVI, 2009) set out to formulate a tool for media literacy measurement through two dimensions: as individual competences and environmental factors. By using this method, the researchers could find positive correlation between a country's social and educational level and the level of media literacy. The study also showed that "if there is no formal strategy for the fostering of a media literate population, then that population is unlikely to be media literate" (EAVI, 2009, p. 12).

As presented earlier, there are numerous international research projects dealing with various aspects of media literacy. However, the Hungarian review displayed the relatively low number of research projects done in this field. This present work aims to fill in this gap by using a new research approach: critical discourse analysis.

3. Methodology

Early on in this research project, when interviewing the first policy experts, it became clear that the traditional, quantitative approach to inquiry would not be appropriate to disentangle the history of media literacy education alone. Similarly, at the initial screening of the policy documents collected for analysis, the importance of the language itself used in these document became obvious. It was understood that the alternating way media literacy appeared in the policies, the concepts, aims and expected knowledge in connection with media literacy education, could best be examined by focusing on language use. For these reasons, the project's methodology is embedded in the qualitative interpretivist tradition, and more specifically, the methods used belong to a new approach in policy studies: critical policy analysis.

The methodology adopted in this project can be broadly considered interpretivist. The interpretivist paradigm draws upon the work of Schultz and Garfinkel (phenomenology), the Chicago School of Sociology, and Boad and Malinowski (Cohen and Carbtree, 2006). The qualitative and interpretivist approach initially might seem to be in contradiction with classical educational policy studies, which were mostly influenced by positivism and post-positivism (Levinson, Sutton, & Winstead, 2009; Nagel, 1984). The traditional view presented policy-making as a "deliberate process, undertaken by a known and bounded set of actors, who use research and reason to ensure the best policy outcomes" (Deim et al., 2014, p.1069). However, in the last three decades a growing number of policy researchers started using a new approach: they started focusing on critical frameworks. Diem et al. (2014) highlight the work of Ball (1991, 1993, 1994) and Stone (2002) who begin changing the

common approach to policy analysis. Nevertheless, other researchers also critiqued the traditional toolkit in policy research, because they considered it limiting, and a too easy solution for all problems under investigation (Deim et al., 2014). Similarly to other scholars working with a deconstructivist frame, the research project is based on a framework that draws upon critical discourse analysis.

3.1. The research framework

Meutzenfeldt (1992, p. 4) defines discourse as: "the complex of […] notions, categories, ways of thinking and ways of communicating that constitutes a power-infused system of knowledge". In policy analysis the concept of discourse is used to examine "how political processes and policy-making shape and are shaped by both social power relations and the power of the state." (Taylor, 1997, p. 25) Another basis for working with critical policy analysis is Norman Fairclough's work. Fairclough discusses the relationship between "discursive practices, events and texts", and "wider social and cultural structures, relationships and processes" through which he explores the linkages between discourse, ideology and power (Fairclough, 1993, p. 135). Building on Fairclough's approach, this thesis will focus on the different discourses on media literacy that appear in education policies.

For "uncovering" the Hungarian education policy-making process, I followed the footsteps of those scholars who recommend a "new set of tools" (Ball, 1990, p. 18) for understanding policy-making. I applied approaches that "have moved away from the notion of policy as a product (merely enshrined in a policy text) to one which focuses on policy as process" (Hyatt, 2013, p. 836). In doing so, David Hyatt's analytical framework was used (see Figure 1 below) that builds upon "a more linguistic element to supplement and elucidate critical educational policy analysis that draws on a discursive perspective." (Hyatt, 2013, p. 836). This framework comprises two elements: one that deals with contextualizing and one with deconstructing the policy.
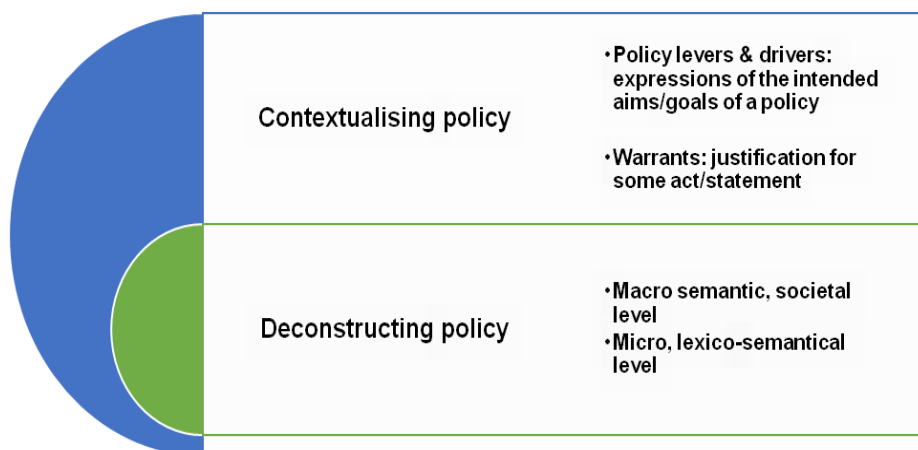

Figure 1: A model representation of Hyatt's analytical framework for critical educational policy analysis

The contextualizing element is important in understanding the political and social context in which policy was made. Moreover, it is very important that education policy-making has to be placed within a broader economic, social and historical context. The framework thus follows Codd's (1988, pp. 243-244) argument who highlights that: "Policy documents […] are ideological texts that have been constructed within a particular context. The task of deconstruction begins with the recognition of that context." The contextualization component is composed of two elements: policy levers and drivers - these refer "to expressions of the intended aims or goals of a policy" (Hyatt, 2013, p. 838) - and warrants, or "the justification, authority or «reasonable grounds» established for some act, course of action, statement or belief" (Cochran-Smith and Fries, 2001, p. 4) According to Hyatt (2013) levers aid policy-steering, being instruments 'the state has at its disposal to direct, manage and shape change in public services… functional mechanisms through which government and its agencies seek to implement policies' (Steer et al., 2007, p. 177). In educational settings, these levers can be target-setting, funding, inspection etc. (Hyatt, 2013). As another important element of contextualization, warrants provide justification for policies. The construction and the debate of policy happen through language and thus they are discursively meditated (Hyatt, 2013). Cochran-Smith and Fries (2001) identify three types of warrants: evidentiary warrants, accountability warrants and political warrants. The evidentiary warrant is "the establishment of a position based on evidence" (Hyatt, 2013, p. 839). This warrant is based on the commonly accepted view that if a justification is based on evidence, it is undisputable. The CDA-approach can help us in highlighting that facts, research figures, findings are never neutral: they are always constructed (Hyatt, 2013). The accountability warrant on the other hand, emphasizes results and outcomes. In policy-making, this type of warrants focus on what the results will be, if a specific policy will be adopted (e.g. initiatives that aim to improve standards). And finally political warrants "refer to the way in which a policy is justified in terms of the public/national interest, the public good" (Hyatt, 2013, p. 839).

The second component of the analytical framework deals with a fine-grained textual analysis: deconstructing the policy. This component engages with text and discourse using a number of analytical lenses and tools derived from Critical Discourse Analysis, CDA, (Fairclough, 1995) and Critical Literacy Analysis (Hyatt, 2005). For a more thorough understanding of the tools used in this analysis, it is important introduce some aspects of Norman Fairclough's social theory of discourse. By discourse, Fairclough means primarily spoken or written language. Fairclough argues that language "is socially shaped, but it is also

socially shaping, or constitutive. […] Language use is always simultaneously constitutive of (i) social identities, (ii) social relations and (iii) systems of knowledge and belief […]" (Fairclough, 1993, p. 131). The value of using CDA for this thesis is thus the opportunity to analyze social practices and processes, such as policy-making, from a semiotic point of view.

When it comes to the macro semantic level of the deconstruction, Hyatt uses a number of criteria borrowed from critical discursive approaches in analyzing policy texts: modes of legitimation, interdiscursivity and intertextuality. Legitimation in this type of analysis means attaching values and norms to policies so to justify them. Hyatt (2013) uses Fairclough's four main modes through which legitimation is accomplished in discourses: authorization (reference to tradition or authority), rationalization (reference to a social action's usefulness), moral evaluation (reference to what is considered bad or good) and mythopoesis (moral advises on the positive or negative outcomes of certain actions). Interdiscursivity and intertextuality is again borrowed from Fairclough. He uses interdiscursivity to describe "the normal heterogeneity of texts in being constituted by combinations of diverse genres and discourses" (Fairclough, 1993, p. 134). Intertextuality is defined as borrowings from other texts as a means for supporting claims or reinforcing arguments (Hyatt, 2013).

Finally, the last element of the framework deals with the micro lexico-semantical analysis of the texts. In this analysis, one can use criteria such as evaluation, presupposition/implication and lexico-grammatical constructions in deciphering policy texts. Evaluation can be used in when analyzing a "speaker or writer's attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about" (Hunston and Thompson, 2000, p. 5). Hyatt (2013, p. 841) explains that evaluation can be carried by words, such as excellent or terrible, but it can be also carried by "superficially neutral choices […] but which have the potential to evoke judgemental responses" (such as the use of reform, deregulation, innovation in policy texts). And finally, prepsupposition/implication and lexico-grammatical constructions are both tools in textual analysis. For instance, the use of change of state verbs (the government has modified unfair policy) presupposes or implies "the factuality of a previous state" (Hyatt, 2013, p. 842). Similarly, specific lexico-grammatical constructions aid in understanding how reality is constructed. In this instance, the specific use of pronouns (us versus them), voice and tense, or figures of speech can be revealing in terms of rhetorical constructions. The above mentioned elements became thus the building blocks in the analysis of Hungarian education policy.

The textual data for this analysis comes from three sources: (1) the National Core Curricula, (2) the frame curricula, and (3) the Act on Public Education. For a more refined understanding of the policy, these findings were then corroborated by information gathered through expert interviews. For broadening the context of these policies, yearly official education reports (*Jelentés a magyar közoktatásról*) were also examined. These reports proved to be especially valuable since they provided "a comprehensive analysis of the development of education" (Lannert, 2004), and over the last twenty years they "contributed to the predictability, rationality and quality of education policy process" (Lannert, 2004). It is important to note that these reports were not analyzed with the help of the CDA-framework presented earlier; these were used for contextualising the findings.

4. Findings

There is a wide public interest lately in topics such as Internet safety, online bullying, or the skills future citizens need to thrive in a digital world. Through initial immersion in the literature of media literacy education, it seemed that Hungary is in a very fortunate situation: it is one of the few countries in which media literacy appears in the educational system as a stand-alone optional subject. Moreover, the subject was first introduced over twenty years ago, which seemingly meant that it had developed a prestige and recognition among educators and pupils alike. However, the interviews with media literacy experts and educational policy-makers painted a very different picture. In comparison with their initial enthusiasm in the 1990s, these experts predicted the total demise of media literacy education in the coming years. Their pessimism was in stark contrast to what the educational policies were showing.

In trying to find the key to this dilemma and understand the position of media literacy in the Hungarian educational system, three major research questions were formulated: *How and why did media literacy education in Hungary make its way into the public education system during the 1990s? In what ways did this area of study evolve over time? What is the position of media literacy education in contemporary Hungary?*

The textual analysis and the expert interviews helped in finding answers to the three main research questions.

How and why did media literacy education in Hungary make its way into the public education system during the 1990s?

Media literacy education in Hungary has its roots in aesthetics education. As a means for educational innovation, in the 1960s literature teachers were assigned to teach four hours

of film aesthetics per year in secondary education (Szíjártó, 2007). This is not the least surprising, since as Martens observes: "historically, media literacy education has often been synonym for learning to appreciate the aesthetic qualities of mass media, especially the cinematic arts" (2010, p. 8). Moreover, the concept of literacy itself initially meant to be knowledgable about works of aesthetic quality. The lack of teachers' professional training in film aesthetics, however, eventually led to the "disappearance" of these classes from the daily practice of teachers. The popularity of the Eastern European New Wave in filmmaking together with a gradual opening of the Communist regime, gave rise to extra-curricular classes and film clubs around Hungary. These film passionate teachers eventually formed a working group. They lobbied for the introduction of the *Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education* subject at the beginning of the 1990s. The introduction of media literacy in Hungarian public education was possible through an opening of a "policy window" (Kingdon, 2003). "Policy windows" open when "a problem is recognized, a solution is available, the political climate makes the time right for change, and the constraints do not prohibit action" (Kingdon, 2003, p. 88). The "window" opened for media literacy education with the 1995 National Core Curriculum. The introduction of the 1995 NCC was proceeded by fierce political and media debates, since it aimed to introduce a more decentralized approach to education, and to present modern elements. The *Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education* subject offered a solution: it presented contemporary and innovative content that could further strengthen the modern image of the new NCC (Szíjártó, 2007).

In terms of the educational content, media literacy as such did not appear in the 1995 core curriculum. However, a cross-curricular requirement called *Culture of Communication* presented many similar traits to what we call media literacy today. The critical discourse analysis revealed a protectionist discourse with regards of harmful media effects. This protectionist discourse can be observed all through the analyzed period, but I will touch upon this finding when discussing the second research question. In terms of how media literacy education appeared in educational policies, the *Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education* subject's strong film focus has to be acknowledged. Many concepts, theories and examples were found that pertain to the field of aesthetics and film education.

With the 1998 change of government, new provisions were introduced in public education. The introduction of the framework curricula resulted in transforming *Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education* into a module subject with a smaller number of stipulated hours per academic year (this was the case with other "modern" subjects as well, such as Dance and drama or Social studies). The module subjects were in a very peculiar

situation. On one hand, schools and teachers had to struggle with an ever-growing educational content (in the case of traditional subjects), while there was no opportunity for having even more compulsory subjects in an overloaded educational system (Jakab, 2003). On the other hand, it became obvious that these new subjects were needed, and had to be somehow crammed into the curriculum. Media literacy education could have striven and develop, but in practice this was hardly possible. This ambivalent situation could be recognized in the textual analysis as well. In the framework curricula of the *Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education* subject, the authors relied heavily on the discourse of powerful media. By using stylistic devices, the authors stressed the so-called extraordinary impact of the media on youth. By presenting the mass media as an important actor with a power to influence people, the curricula's authors were positioning this subject as an important one for pupils' development. The analysis also showed an interesting attitude towards mass media products: as a threat to high culture. This can be explained by the professional background of those who worked on the content of the curricula (e.g., film directors, philosophers). As a continuation of the 1995 NCC, in the frame curricula the film focus was clearly discernible, while the print press, the radio or the internet were seldom mentioned. However, an important finding was that policymakers would have liked pupils to have an active relationship with the media. When analyzing the desirable outcomes of the subject, the authors used evaluative adjectives and noun phrases with implicit values, such as "an independent" and a "critical" attitude and an "open mind". Thus Hungarian media literacy advocates at the end of the 1990s-beginning of 2000s were already striving for an education content that was going to equip pupils with skills to use the media in an independent and critical way.

In what ways did media literacy evolve over time?

As it was mentioned earlier, media literacy education began with a strong moving image focus and this has not changed throughout these last twenty years. The textual analysis revealed that in the description of the subject many concepts pertained to film culture and film studies. Moreover, in these documents the first aim of the subject had always been the development of "audiovisual" or "film literacy". However, from the beginning of the new millennium, one could observe a shift towards a social sciences discourse. The social sciences aspect was highlighted by the presence in the framework curriculum of such concepts as: "personality development", "citizens", "civic engagement", and so on. The role of mass media in society occupies a central position in the latest, 2012, curriculum as well. Media literacy has a somewhat ambiguous meaning, and there are many interrelated concepts in

connection with it. The CDA-analysis revealed that there are a number of subjects that are "interested" in embracing media literacy education. One of these subjects was from the very beginning, Information Technology (IT). As early as 1995, the main areas of teaching for the Information Technology subject were: computer skills, information literacy, technical aspects of information management, and mass media. There is a constant struggle between advocates of media literacy, media and information literacy, and information literacy. The appropriation of media literacy by IT can be traced through all major policy documents. Topics usually connected to media literacy (such as a critical knowledge of traditional media and online media; or responsible behaviour in the online world), appear in IT education under the media informatics section. The policymakers here, as elsewhere around the globe, have had difficulties in clearly demarcating the line between media literacy and IT knowledge since in many ways they overlap. As presented earlier, the lack of agreement among media literacy scholars leads to an appropriation of this field by other areas. The range of discourses reflects different interests and shifting priorities within public education.

Finally, an interesting evolution that could be traced in the last twenty years was the changes in cross-curricular requirements. These cross-curricular requirements had different names in different educational policies, yet their main purpose was the same: to present themes that had to appear throughout the educational system. Although media literacy education was introduced as a development area only in 2012, contents that can be connected to this field can be found as early as 1995. In the 1995 NCC, *Communication Culture* was one of these requirements. In the description of *Communication Culture*, the perceived power of mass media to potentially influence people's lifestyle and thinking was highlighted. Then in the 2003 NCC, *Information and Communication Culture* was introduced. The 2003 NCC provided a detailed account of how schools should prepare students for a critical usage of information gathered through electronic means. The change of name shows a discourse that is associated with information literacy. The 2007 NCC then introduced another concept: *Digital competency*, as one of the key competencies (this later appeared in the 2012 NCC as well). The introduction of "competencies" was a revealing example of how the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has influenced national education policy discourse (Ball, 2008; Bieber and Martens, 2011). When analysing the description of this competency using the analytical framework, it became clear that the skills needed to become "digitally competent" constitute only a smaller part of what media literacy stands for. However, the description of this competency also highlights the importance of critical thinking and responsible use of information and media, which is an integral part of media

literacy education. In addition to *Digital competency*, two other competencies are also relatively close to media literacy: *Aesthetic and Artistic Awareness and Expression*, and *Social and Civic Competencies*. The last NCC in 2012 introduced *Media literacy* as a development area. The aims of this development area can be summarised in the following way: through media literacy education pupils will understand the language of media, which is the key to participatory democracy, a value-based life and eventually participation in the global mediated community.

It has to be highlighted that there is no straightforward answer to the second research question. Throughout the years, media literacy (or, more accurately, what the contemporary understanding of media literacy is) appeared in different discourses. The analysis showed that shifting governmental priorities, supranational political organizations and other subjects' advocates have all borrowed the term for their own rhetorical aims.

What is the position of media literacy education in contemporary Hungary?

For answering the third research question, I focused on the latest National Core Curriculum, of 2012, and the frame curricula adopted in 2013. The analytical tool used for examining these policy documents was useful in uncovering the different discourses that shape contemporary media literacy education in Hungary. There are a number of novelties in the 2012 NCC that can be considered positive in terms of media literacy education development. First of all, media literacy appears for the first time as a development area. The development area's aim is to "permeate the whole educational process" (NCC, 2012). This is a very important policy lever, since it highlights that media literacy should appear throughout public education. The CDA-analysis showed that, as a development area, media literacy is defined as a civic competency: media literacy is positioned as a key aspect of participatory democracy and a tool for global communication. However, the subject that is directly connected to media literacy, *Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education* is positioned among *Art* subjects. The ambiguities of the subject were also obvious from the CDA-analysis. The focus of *Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education* is on the moving image and on cinematic art. Nonetheless, as shown above, over the years the number of units that deal with the role of media in society kept on growing. Another change that occurred in the 2012 NCC was that media literacy education did not only appear in the stand-alone subject, but also as a cross-curricular theme. Media literacy as a cross-curricular topic appeared in *Visual Culture* on primary level (with some references in *ICT education*), and on lower secondary level in *Visual Culture, Hungarian Language and Literature* and *History* (with some

references in *Science, ICT, Biology* and *Geography*, as well). The CDA-analysis revealed that media literacy was understood and defined in a number of ways by the different actors writing these educational documents. Different subjects appropriated and shaped media literacy in order to strengthen their own agendas. The CDA-analysis also revealed that in primary education, for the *Visual Culture* subject the media literacy content has a clear structure and a very specific media experience approach based on the German concept of *Medienpädagogik*. Unfortunately, this approach is not continued on lower and upper secondary level. While media literacy education seemed to be in a very good position when it came to educational policies, the expert interviewees presented a very grim situation. For this reason exactly, it was necessary to complement the findings of the CDA-analysis. It is important to mention though, that there is no "truth" out there that these experts can formulate. From a constructivist ontological position, the task of the researcher is to search for meanings that actors use to make sense of their world (Sarantakos, 2005), and not truths. For instance media literacy expert Krisztina Nagy, who worked on the frame curriculum for *Visual Culture*, expressed satisfaction that at least media literacy now appears on primary level as well. It seems though, that those who were very active during the initial phase of media literacy education development (László Hartai, György Jakab, András Lányi), see recent developments in a gloomy light. Some of their arguments are well-rounded: teachers who did not receive an education on how to teach media literacy will probably not add this topic to their daily practice (irrespective of the fact that it appears in the NCC and the frame curricula). This is true for subjects where media literacy was added as a cross-curricular topic (*History, Visual Culture, Hungarian Language and Literature*). Moreover, they argue that by making media literacy a cross-curricular topic, it will slowly but surely disappear from the education system. And lastly, they contend, since *Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education* is only offered as an optional subject on upper secondary level, there is no proper class time for children to be able to understand media literacy.

These findings are somewhat ambivalent. On the one hand, it is clear that in comparison with other countries, Hungary is in the special position of having media literacy education clearly stipulated in the national core curriculum and the framework curricula. On the other hand, it seems that there is no clear strategy of how media literacy should be taught in public schools. In the following, I will provide a number of possible recommendations based on the findings of the research project.

4.1. Future research directions and recommendations

One of the most important future research directions is to see how the policies analyzed in this project are delivered in schools. Or, to put it more directly: how does media literacy education happen in schools? Such an endeavor would enrich greatly our understanding to what happens during media literacy classes, what kind of teaching resources (textbooks, lesson plans, digital tools) are available for teachers, and what are the major difficulties in teaching media literacy. Moreover, by doing classroom research, best practices could also be gathered, then later shared among media literacy educators. Because of their shared historical paths and cultural proximity, this line of research could also be extended to other Central and Eastern European countries. As a first step, it would be interesting to see a comparative policy analysis on media literacy education between neighboring countries. Then this comparative approach could be extended to classroom research in the CEE region. This would add important resources to the body of knowledge in media literacy research.

It was not in this project's scope to address the role of media industry or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in media literacy education. Nevertheless, these two actors are of major interest in Hungary as well. Lately, there has been a growing interest in topics such as internet safety and cyber bullying on part of the mass media and various NGOs. While these are just two of the many areas of media literacy, it would be a compelling project to see how these actors see their role in promoting media literacy.

In this final part, I will present some recommendations based on the findings of the research project. One of the first questions that need to be addressed by policymakers is where to position *Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education*. As it was mentioned several times before, the initial focus of the *Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education* was film culture, and therefore it was positioned among *Arts* subjects. However, throughout the years, this focus has diminished and the social aspects of mass media became more prevalent. In order to be in line with contemporary strands within media literacy, it would be important to position *Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education* among *Social Science* subjects. Consistency is one of the key recommendations when it comes to a more specific level in the frame curricula. Media literacy content in primary education differs greatly to what can be found on upper levels. The educational approach, the wording, and the style are all dissimilar on primary and secondary level. The reasoning behind this difference is, according to the interviewees, is that two distinct teams worked on the frame curricula. The outlined recommendations should be understood as an engaged researcher's advices. It is hoped that

these proposals can be of help since the revision of the 2012 national core curriculum is on its way, thus it would be the perfect timing to address these questions.

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