

Media and Information Literacy Policies in Finland (2013)



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1. Dimension	(Short) Historical background
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In Finland the beginning of the contemporary media educational activities can be placed in 1950s, in early days of audiovisual popular liberal education, where the concern of effects of film on the individual and on the society raised. Since that the 'concern' has been one of the key words of media education, only the object of the concern has been varied during the decades from film and television to the music videos, the internet and digital games.

Northern countries including Finland have been pioneers especially in the field of newspaper education after 1960s. In Finland the Finnish Newspaper Association arranged in 1964 a press course for teachers of history and civics. Teaching about newspapers was intended to strengthen pupils' societal orientation in schools (Kupiainen, Sintonen & Suoranta, 2008).

1970s was active period of discussion about mass media education in large scale in Finland and also in UNESCO. In the end of 1970s UNESCO commissioned a survey of the mass media education in several countries, including Finland. UNESCO was interested to compare international media education and curricular development in schools in order to develop pupils' critical attitude towards mass media. In Finland, a researcher of YLE (Finnish national broadcasting company) Sirkka Minkkinen wrote the report about Finnish mass media education to the UNESCO and it occasioned a great interest in the Finnish practices. (Ibid.) After the report Minkkinen had a task to create for UNESCO a general curricular model for mass media education, which was more extensive than the previous school model (see Minkkinen 1978). In Minkkinen's model the electronic communication, i.e. television and other audiovisual representation, were the basic actor in people's everyday environment. In this environment media education was needed to defend the autonomy of the subject.

According Minkkinen, the starting point for media education needed to be societal and critical but geared to art education as well (Kivelä & Minkkinen, 1979; Kupiainen, Sintonen & Suoranta 2008). This model was adapted to UNESCO that published the General Curricular Model for Mass Media Education in 1978 (Minkkinen 1978). Unfortunately we do not know what the reception of the model was and how much it was used worldwide. In the end of 1970s and in the beginning of 1980s

media education was already in the threshold of something new, that was new youth culture with Music Television, VHS-videos and punk-movement. Perhaps Minkkinen's model was not valid in the changed cultural situation.

After 1980s the picture of the media education has expanded and varied and for example in 1990s the discussion in Finland focused more on theories of Len Masterman and his book *Teaching the Media* (1986) than Minkkinen's model. Researchers in the field of media education and popular culture started to be interested in all kind of media phenomena in youth culture but the early concern of media effects stayed alive as well. Sirkku Kotilainen and Juha Suoranta noticed in 2005 that especially Finnish media education research consisted of four different tribes of media education: the technology tribe, the protection tribe, the culture research tribe, and the critical tribe (Kotilainen & Suoranta, 2005). The technology tribe was characterized by the interest in technology for learning, using information and communication technology and media in the learning. The protection tribe was concerned about the media effects and safety of children when they are touched with the media. The culture research tribe was driven especially by the British cultural studies movement. The critical tribe relied on critical pedagogy and was interested in media participation and resistance strategies. The borders of the tribes were not seen especially strict. Rather the "tribe thinking" was a way to see different approaches and give a big picture of Finnish media education movement.

The specialty of Finnish media education has been an attempt to bring together different approaches of media education and build a strong connects between research and practical media education in the field. Finnish media education has been developed by the co-operation of the government, schools and school administration, academia and the third sector, especially many NGO organizations. Among these organizations is for example the Finnish Society on Media Education, which support the research and practice of media education national wide through web service and seminars (see more in English: www.mediaeducation.fi).

In his report for the Nordic expert meeting on media and information literacies in August 2013 organized by Swedish Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers, Nordicom and Swedish Media Council, Jon Dunås (2013, 41) concludes that Finland stands out in comparison with other Nordic countries, to the extent that there is a coherent national policy that includes several policy areas. The key policy areas of audiovisual policy within cultural policy, youth policy and education

policy come under the same Finnish ministry and, all of those policies notice the importance of developing media and information literacies as skills needed today and in future.

Conclusion:

Finland has been a 'model student' in the EU and recent developments in the field of media literacy is tied to European development and harmonization (Kotilainen and Suoranta 2007, 112). Media education has been a part of the Finnish school curriculum since 1970, first under the banner of mass media education. Nevertheless, media literacy education has never been a subject in Finnish schools but a so-called 'cross-curricular theme' both in compulsory and upper secondary school. In fact, the lack of a specific school subject and the voluntary status of media literacy education have brought out some problems. For example, the implementation and practices of media literacy education depend on the activity of individual teachers and schools. Therefore, there are huge disparities across schools. There are inequalities between teacher training programmes as well. Although teacher training in Finland is of quite high quality, it's still possible to graduate without having basic knowledge about media education. (Kupiainen 2010; 2013).

2. Dimension	Legal policy framework
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The Finnish government has paid quite a lot of attention to young people's media literacy and safe media environment especially from the beginning of 21st century. 2003 the Ministry of Education initiated a Children and Media Programme in order to support children in changing media environment. The programme identified nine separate areas for operational work, including legislation to protect children from harmful material and criminal content, new aspects of media education, developing the distribution of information and promoting media education research, encouraging the production of quality content, the responsibilities of media industry and supporting parents and the family (Finnish Media Education Policies 2009, 6). Interestingly the first project of the programme focused on the development of media education for small children. Actually, most of the projects were implemented outside the school. Thus, media literacy education is strongly a part of curricularization of leisure and everyday life in Finland (Kupiainen 2010).

2007 The Ministry of Education set up a committee to chart the state and development needs of media literacy in Finland. The Committee worked for a proposal for an action programme for developing media skills and knowledge as a part of the promotion of civil and knowledge society. The proposal included suggestions to change laws concerning civil rights, core curricula and teacher

training. Several suggestions from the Committee's action plan were incorporated as part of the Ministry of Education's policy guidelines 2007. (Ibid. 7)

The next strategy plan for media education in Finland was the Education and Research 2007-2012 Development Plan, which promoted the creation of methods and materials for the advancement of media education and media literacy for schools and other educational institutions. (Ibid.) The latest strategy plan by Ministry of Education and Culture is above mentioned *Good Media Literacy National Policy Guidelines 2013-2016* (in english: http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut/2013/Hyva_medialukutaito.html?lang=fi&extra_locale=en), published in the end of year 2013. These new policy guidelines for good media literacy are built on the principles set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. An important basic assumption in the Convention is the belief that children and adolescents are active subjects. The media literacy policy guidelines and their implementation aim to help achieve the goal in *the Government Programme* of making sure that every child and adolescent has the prerequisites for participating and accessing the information society. Good skills in media literacy are an important element for participation and inclusion in society: aiming to develop media education by fostering equality, diversity and quality. The document includes four principles of media literacy. These are a) equality and pluralism, b) systematic and long-term work, c) transparency and cooperation and d) solid knowledge base and high quality.

Media education policies are framed especially in the Basic Education Act and the Ministry of Education and Culture has channeled funds through the National Board of Education to educational providers for media education and developing learning environments. Media education is also part of legislation of audiovisual programmes. As part of this act the national media education authority from 2012 to the end 2013 was the Finnish Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media. It's duties was to promote and coordinate media education nationally and supervise the offer of audiovisual programmes from the perspective of child protection. From the beginning of 2014 these duties belongs to the National Audiovisual Institute.

Finnish media education policy has explicit links with several NGO organizations; some of these promote media education in cooperation with the ministry as part of main duties or even as main duties, like the Finnish Society on Media Education, Media Education Centre Metka and KouluKino – School Cinema Association, which are funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Other NGOs include the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare, Kerhokeskus – the Centre for School Clubs, Save the Children Finland and the Finnish Parents' League.

Promoting media literacy has become widespread in media sector companies. For example the Finnish Newspaper Association organizes newspaper education and the Finnish Broadcasting Company has funded many kinds of media education projects. Companies that provide online services have also activated in media education as well as game industry. Overall all actors in the field of media education cooperate and discuss about goals and practices in the field of media education. The National Media Education Forum for example has gathered GOs, NGOs, private sector and also researchers together once a year to think media education and possible cooperation possibilities. There is a clear dialogue and shared framework of understanding of media education between different actors in the field of media education.

The Finnish Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media has been a link to the European Union. Finland has been represented also in both of the Media Education Expert Groups, first appointed by the European Commission 2006 and second with special mandate of focusing on media literacy in schools appointed in 2011. Safer Internet Programme is also launched in Finland in cooperation by three parties: the Finnish Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media, the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare and Save the Children Finland. Safer Internet Finland organizes for example in Finland Media Skill Week. In other European countries the same week is called Internet Safety Week. In the Finland the context is wider focusing especially on media education and literacies.

Conclusion:

Media education is seen in different policy areas, which are cultural policy, youth policy, art and artist policy, general education policy including early childhood education and library policy. The Ministry of Justice addresses media education also from the viewpoint of social inclusion and exertion of influence as part of democratic education.

3.1 Dimension	Capacity-building: teacher training
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In Finland the national basic curriculum do not refer explicitly to media education as a single theme, but different aspects of media education recur remarkably often in different parts, both on a general level, when it comes to developing students' ability to process information and orient themselves in society, and within the various school subjects.

Media education has conducted in Finnish schools especially as so called cross-curricular theme under the title "media skills and communication" (MSC) both in level of primary and secondary school. In the upper secondary school the term is "communication and media competence". These themes are integrated into many school subjects, mainly into school subjects of visual arts, history, social science and mother tongue. Finnish secondary basic education curriculum includes all together seven cross-curricular themes. Currently, the Finnish secondary basic education curriculum, together with preschool curriculum is in the process of renewing. Cross-curricular themes will not be included to the new basic curricula, nor themes like media skills and communication, which seem to be on the way to the integration in the conceptualizations of multiliteracies, as transmedia literacies (Frau-Meigs, 2013) or media, visual and information literacies (f.ex. Kotilainen & Suoninen, 2013).

According to the standard definition, media literacy is "the ability to access, understand and create communications in a variety of contexts" (Ofcom, 2006). This definition is based on the so-called Aspen definition, which had four parts originally: access, analyze, evaluate, and produce (Tyner, 1998, p. 120). From this perspective, media literacy is an individualized and cognitive skill. This is the way it has been seen in the current curriculum in Finland as well. Moreover, it has also been seen more as a critical way to "read" multimodal texts aiming a critical gaze towards media. Contemporary digital media sphere and the research on children and media calls for more comprehensive perspective to understand media literacy bound up with social, institutional and cultural relationships and as situated practices (cf. Lankshear & Knobel, 2006).

According the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education, 2004, 37–38 the aims in this cross-curricular theme are:

1. express themselves in a versatile, responsible way, and to interpret communication by others
2. develop their information management skills, and to compare, choose and utilize acquired information
3. take a critical stance towards contents conveyed by the media, and to ponder the related values of ethics and aesthetics in communication
4. produce and transmit messages, and use the media appropriately
5. use media and communication tools in information acquisition and transmission, and in various interactive situations

In the national core curriculum the term 'media skills' is used instead of 'media literacy', that has been used internationally. The term 'media literacy' has had difficulties especially in the school context because Finnish language has not a distinction between the terms 'literacy' and 'reading skill'. 'Literacy' is understood in the Finnish language traditionally as a pure ability to read only literal texts, and therefore many teachers do not accept the term 'literacy' in the context of media, although all kind of media content is largely understood as text-based representation.

According the evaluation of cross-curricular themes in 2010 teachers of ninth-grade pupils in Finland finds the Media Skills and Communication important: for 91% of participants in survey it is extremely important or important theme. Among all seven cross-curricular themes, Media Skills and Communication is third in regard to teacher's interest, and 93% of teachers say that the theme is necessary or highly necessary (Niemi, 2012; Kupiainen 2013). These percentages indicates that media education have been seen highly important by Finnish teachers.

In Finland, there are two universities offering master's degree in media education: University of Lapland (educational sciences) and University of Tampere (media studies together with educational sciences). At the University of Tampere, master courses in media literacies are offered also, for example, to students of journalism, youth work and information sciences. The professorship of the program is funded by media foundations and the church. At the University of Helsinki media education is offered as a minor subject. At other universities, media and information literacies are offered as optional courses.

At the above mentioned Universities several courses of media education are offered in teachers' training but only few are compulsory. At the University of Tampere the students of early childhood education are active to study media education as well as students in teacher training.

Media education policies do not address any special issues to teacher training. Universities are independent actors and their educational and research policy differs from each other. None of the universities has highlighted media education as one of the main strategy areas, neither any of the teacher training programs.

According the national evaluation by the Finnish Centre of Audiovisual Media and Media Education (Pekkala et. al. 2013) media education has been offered mainly in educational sciences

and media studies and, approximately 80 masters' thesis have focused on this theme 2007–2012. The evaluation does not tell how many master theses belong to the teacher training.

Topics of the courses of the MA program on media education (120 ECTS) at the University of Tampere 2012-2015 are:

- Media, culture and education
- Media literacies and wiki learning
- Audience relationships with media
- Changing learning environments
- Workshop on media literacies
- Research methodologies
- Project studies on media education
- Thesis seminar and thesis

The course on "Project studies on media education" is a practical work, for example, learning material or training at school, media, library or youth work. Mainly the Masters' Thesis is based on the Project Studies.

The academic research including doctoral dissertations on media education has increased within recent years in Finland. The focus has been mainly in children and youth, media literacies and ICT in learning and teaching. In Finland the missing themes are, for example, evaluative studies on pedagogic interventions, learning of media literacies at school and other pedagogical contexts and studies on teachers' competencies in MIL. There is also a need for more theoretical conceptual research of media education (Pekkala et.al. 2013). In the Finnish media education discussion, it is pointed out that there is room for different kinds of research approaches which could together constitute the point of departure for comprehensive research, development and teaching of media literacy and culture (Kupiainen, Sintonen and Suoranta 2008: 23–24).

3.2 Dimension	Capacity-building: <i>Teaching/training Materials and other relevant content</i>
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In Finnish school systems teachers are quite independent to plan their teaching and learning materials. Textbooks especially in Mother Tongue offer some materials for media education almost in every level of basic education but still there is a need for learning materials. Therefore many

organizations out of school have offered both lesson plans and other resources for media education as well.

One of the most important portal on the internet for all kind of resources is mediakasvatus.fi. It offers for teachers and pupils an access almost for all resources that has been published in Finland. All registered users are free to upload their own resources to the portal as well. Instead of lack of materials the overflow of materials seems to be bigger problem these days. Digital technology helps to share all kind of resources but sometimes teachers feel it different to find from the digital sphere. Therefore the Finnish Society on Media Education has maintained the important portal for media education and publishes media education newsletter regularly. Finnish Society on Media Education uses also social media like Twitter and Facebook actively on material sharing and as an information channel.

Media education resources have been produced by Finnish national Board of Education as well as independent associations, teachers as well as private sector. For example the Finnish Newspaper Association has published lot of different materials for all levels of teaching from early childhood to the needs of teacher training. Most often the materials are an outcome of different projects.

Libraries and the Finnish Library Association are important material providers as well. They have developed operational models and learning materials for media education carried out by libraries and organized training for library professionals, especially during the Children and Media programme that was funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture 2006-2010.

Academic researchers, university and schoolteachers and all other actors in the field of media education meet each other and share practices and research information regularly in conferences and research meetings. Experience sharing is needed due the complex nature of media education between different academic subject and knowledge areas.

3.3 Dimension	Capacity-building: funding
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When media education has spread into society as "curriculum of everyday life" (Kupiainen 2010), funding has been essential part of development together with political willingness to develop and collaborate in several branches of society. Multiple areas and long tradition of the development

in media education in Finland makes it difficult to define any sums of funding. In general, it is difficult to define funding: do we mean only financial support or several kinds of human and material resources as well? Instead of listing millions of euros which have been delivered to the development since the beginning of 21st century we give some examples of the actors that have supported media education.

The Finnish government has paid quite a lot of attention to the development of media education since 2003 when the Ministry of Education initiated a Children and Media Programme (see 2. Dimension in this chapter). Governmental funding has covered research like Children's Mediabarometer, practical projects, learning materials and, for example, support to develop mediaeducation.fi. The latest support to the field has been the establishment of the Finnish Centre of Audiovisual Media and Media Education in 2013 as the governmental body in this field.

Funding coming from European programs like Safer Internet Network has been important for NGO's and GO's development projects conducted in schools as well as in youth and child work. The third sector as civil associations has been important since the beginning of media educational activities in 1950's. Film education is one the pioneers through the resources provided by civil society.

Media companies and media-related foundations, lately also ICT companies as private sector have long traditions in funding media education in Finland. They have funded learning materials, media educational development projects and programs, and recently for example projects like Code School to Small Children and Media Bus that has offered audiovisual services to schools around the country. All these belong to the activities funded by private sector together with multiple research in the area. Moreover, professorship on media education at the University of Tampere has been mainly funded by private sector together with Evangelic Lutheran Church.

The academia has put forward and funded media education as well. In the 21st century several universities have established docentships and media education has included to tasks of teaching and research, especially in media, communication and information studies and, in educational sciences. For example, at the universities of Lapland and Tampere, lectureships and professorships in media education have been established. National funding bodies like Finnish Academy have funded multiple scientific projects.

4 Dimension	Role of actors (outside school system)
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The specialty of Finnish media education has been an attempt to bridge different approaches as well as a practical media education and research. Finnish media education has been developed by the co-operation of the government, schools and school administration, academia and the third sector. Later one has had an extremely important role. It contains for example associations like the Finnish Society on Media Education, which support the research and practice of media education national wide through it's web service and seminars (see more in English: www.mediaeducation.fi). It has been the crossing national network since 2005: app. 300 members from the fields of media, schools, academia, libraries, government agencies and NGO's.

As the governmental body, *The Finnish Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media (MEKU)* has been operating in 2012 – 2013 and, from the beginning of 2014 as a department at the National Audiovisual Institute (also a governmental body). Its remit includes promoting media education nationally and supervising the offer of audiovisual programmes from the perspective of protecting children. Its duties encompass promoting children's media skills, a safe media environment and policy research relevant to this field. It maintains the age limit classification system for audiovisual programmes and trains audiovisual programme classification officers. It also serves as the Finnish centre of the *European Union Safer Internet network* together with the *Mannerheim League for Child Welfare and Save the Children Finland*.

Parents have a big responsibility in media literacy education and media regulation in Finland. Due to the nature of the Finnish school system, children spend a lot of time alone at home without adult supervision. After-school care is provided only for children from first and second grades, with older children having to go home after school. Parents have, in some cases, long working days and children end up spending their time at home playing video games and surfing on the Internet; as a result, children in Finland spend more time with peers than children in other countries do where there is less adult-free time (Kupiainen 2010).

One of the goals of the Ministry's latest *library policy* (till 2015) is that public libraries will play their part in helping children develop their information management and media literacy skills. Projects, training and the creation of networks have, for several years, contributed to developing media education offered by public libraries. Media education has also increasingly found its place in cooperation between schools and libraries. *The Finnish Library Association* is very active in the field of media education. The aims of its most recent project include devising new working methods

for media education and paying attention to the quality of media education in public libraries (Dunås 2013). (see more in Finnish: <http://mediakasvatus.kirjastot.fi/>)

Some municipalities also have cultural centres for children and adolescents where media education is active. Museums and photographic centres preserve cultural heritage and offer experiences and information that is easy to access. Parishes, local associations and regional and national organisations also work together with day care, pre-primary education, schools and educational institutions both locally and regionally. Regional film centres, for example, organize media and film education events (Dunås 2013). Film education as part of media education is nationally promoted by Koulukino (School Cinema Association) has a simple and clear principle: as many pupils as possible should see a film during the school day, in a real cinema, and have the opportunity to discuss what they saw afterwards (in english: <http://www.koulukino.fi/index.php?id=2117>).

Media education integrated to arts education is promoted by several organizations and, included to cultural policies in Finland. For example, the national network Taikalamppu - Aladdin's Lamp is a Finnish network of regional Art Centres for Children and young people. Eleven art centres throughout Finland develop cultural activities for children and young people. Each centre has its own development tasks from the children's cultural field, and one of them has the task to develop media education in artistic activities (in english: <http://www.taikalamppu.fi/index.php/fi/inenglish>)

In Finland, the field of media is also interested in developing media literacies among their users. For example, in the beginning of 2000's Finnish broadcasting company YLE had a project of Mediabus circling around the country helping schools to promote audiovisual education. Moreover, children's news etc. has been developed. Media based national networks such as Finnish Newspaper Association promote media education through the production of learning materials for teachers, participating in teacher education and through local newspapers in collaboration with schools and youth work (publishing youth-based interviews and news). There has emerged productive ways of enhancing youth participation in public discussion through their media productions. For example, *Youth Voice Editorial Board* (which started in 2005 at the Helsinki Youth Department and, since that has formed an established activity in collaboration with the main newspaper Helsingin Sanomat and the Finnish broadcasting company YLE (see more f.ex. Kotilainen 2010).

Media education has been linked in municipal youth counseling to several ways, for example, in art-based cultural and multicultural youth work through media workshops and youth events. The capital Helsinki hosts a special youth house called Happi including media educational activities also as peer tutoring, for example, in gaming and in public news production etc. (see in Finnish: <http://happi.nettiareena.fi/>). They are open and free for every young aged 13-17 as municipal after-school activities, some also integrated with courses in school. Several local communes have followed this example, and especially youth online production has increased in youth counseling around Finland.

Events belong tightly to the promotion of media education in Finland: they are present yearly, mainly by the NGOs in the field of media education like the Newspaper Day, Magazine Day, Mediaeducation.now! etc. The first annual Media Literacy Week in Finland was celebrated in 2013. Before that, the week was known as Safer Internet Week and, Safer Internet Day (www.saferinternetday.org) is still included in Media Literacy Week: the new name gives schools more space to adjust their own actions.

Conclusion:

One can say that in Finland, the basic idea is to support MIL at school by regulatory media authorities, public libraries together with a strong civil society field of organizations. Also private sector, especially media and related networks have participated in developing media education as well. Finnish Society on Media Education as "an overlapping structure" in this field organizing seminars, events and continually developing its web service including social media for media educators is the key actor for promoting dialogue, development and new openings in multiple literacies (media, information and computer literacies) and education. In 2012 this national NGO got a partner from the governmental office MEKU.

5 Dimension	Evaluation mechanisms (inside and outside school)
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In Finland, the first evaluative study in media education was an academic dissertation titled as "Media Culture: A Challenge to Teacher Education" (Kotilainen 2001), published in Finnish. It

includes a case evaluation of the effectiveness of one course in teacher education and statistical evaluation of the state of the art in schools in grades 1-9. The study developed also biographic method in evaluation of the effectiveness in education.

In 2005 the government wanted to find out all the actors of field and look at the practices of media education in different branches, from the perspective of citizen participation (Mediakasvatus 2005). Soon after that, as part of the *Children and Media Program* the government funded a special Media Muffin Project which promoted media literacies in early childhood, especially day care. The impact of the project was studied (Kupiainen et. al. 2006). Moreover, government wanted to look more thoroughly kindergarten's situation in a study titled as "Media Education in Day Care Institutions" (Suoninen 2007). An overview to the Finnish research on media education (mainly master thesis and dissertations) has been studied by Leo Pekkala, Saara Pääjärvi, Lauri Palsa, Saana Korva and Anu Löfgren (2013).

All studies mentioned above have been single studies, both qualitative and statistical ones. Only Children's Mediabarometer 2010 - 2013 has been a yearly national study on the child participation on media and evaluation on media educational activities at home, having children and their parents as respondents of the study (see more: links at the end of the text in english).

Here we give an example of one of the latest studies on the levels of media literacies among Finnish 9th graders, partly as an attempt to create the criterion for further similar evaluative studies of the impact of media education (Kotilainen and Kupiainen 2012):

In 2010 the Finnish National Board of Education evaluated the fulfillment of objectives of Media Skills and Communication together with other cross-curricular themes by a survey for 9th grade pupils and one of their teachers in their school across Finland. Totally, Finnish secondary basic education curriculum includes seven cross-curricular themes, which are integrated into many school subjects. The fulfillment of the goals of all these cross-curricular themes was implemented in the study with 8448 of the 9th graders and the fulfillment of the goals of MSC with 1206 pupils (Kotilainen & Kupiainen 2012).

In the survey by the Finnish National Board of Education both cognitive and cultural approaches of media literacies were approached. The questions were planned in three categories to the

questionnaire: 1) knowledge on media and communication, 2) attitudes on media and communication, and 3) activities related to media and communication. The questions were based on the national core curriculum for schools, which has set some goals for learning and guiding contents for teachers (National Core Curriculum for Basic Education, 2004, see the aims earlier in this chapter). In the curriculum the Internet and online activities were not so much present, but due the rapid changes of the young people's media environment since that the researchers (Kotilainen and Kupiainen 2012) decided to focus on the Internet as the medium, based on the relevance of the Internet in the everyday life of the youngsters (f.ex. Jenkins et. al. 2009).

The survey indicates that pupils who participated in cross-curricular studies of MSC had better results in media knowledge (Kotilainen & Kupiainen 2012; Kupiainen 2013). 82% of pupils who had participated in cross-curricular teaching during school lessons solved knowledge questions compared to those 78% who had not participated in the teaching and solved the questions. The difference is statistically significant. There was also the same kind of difference between pupils who had studied media themes at home and outside of school and those who had not. This relates with earlier research (f.ex. Hobbs 2004), which still is in the starting phase, although the importance of media literacy education has been noticed worldwide.

The study shows that girls were better than boys in mastering media knowledge. Most significant differences between the genders could be found in the evaluation of the reliability of online content, which girls managed much better than boys. But if we look at the online safety girls do not see any problem of making their personal information like age public on the web pages. Moreover, girls seemed to think more often than boys that they could have advance of the media in their everyday life and the possibility to use the media for participation and influence in the society and in ethical communication. Gender-like differences in media use have been noticed also in studies on the Children's Mediabarometer 2010-2013 in Finland, and, similar questions have been raised up (Kotilainen & Suoninen 2013).

Conclusion:

Evaluative studies in Finland consists of single academic and policy studies in the field, mainly for getting to know the actors, areas of media education, practices and youth uses and participation on media, since 2001. Evaluation mechanisms still are at the initial stage. Especially, the impact of media education has been studied relatively little from the perspective of youths' / participants'

learning and from the perspective of pedagogies and teaching. How can we know if media education matters or not?

6 Dimension	Main concepts and legitimizing values
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Media education does not have any clear definition in legal documents, although it is associated to practice based action in everyday life with people from young children to senior citizens. 2009 a Children and Young People's Media Forum by Ministry of Transport and Communications defined some goals of media education. These are a) creative media competence, b) critical media competence, c) social media competence and d) technological-practice media competence. In many legal documents the key concept is media literacy like in the latest document *Good Media Literacy. National Policy Guidelines 2013-2016* by Ministry of Education and Culture. The document refers to definition of media literacy formulated by the European Commission as an ability to access, understand, evaluate and product media. The report makes a mention that media education is a multidisciplinary research field but also an everyday practice in various educational fields.

Media literacies, media skills and communication are on the way to the integration in the conceptualizations of multiple literacies, as transmedia literacies (Frau-Meigs, 2013) or media, visual and information literacies (f.ex. Kotilainen & Suoninen, 2013), for example, in the becoming new curricula to basic education. So far, mostly used in the field of media education have been "media literacies" and "digital literacies", also ICT skills meaning "computer literacies" which does not exist as such. ICT skills has been a different discipline in the school curricula than media literacies or even media and information literacies. In the grades 7-9 pupils have been able already for years to choose ICT skills like coding/ programming as a voluntary course together with more societal and artistic media and communication skills.

According to the standard definition, media literacy is "the ability to access, understand and create communications in a variety of contexts" (Ofcom, 2006). This definition is based on the so-called Aspen definition, which had four parts originally: access, analyze, evaluate, and produce (Tyner, 1998, p. 120). From this perspective, media literacy is an individualized and cognitive skill. This is the way it has been seen in the current curriculum in Finland. Moreover, it has also been seen more as a critical way to "read" multimodal texts aiming to critical gaze towards media. Contemporary media digital sphere and, the research on children and media, calls for more comprehensive

perspective to understand media literacy bound up with social, institutional and cultural relationships and as situated practices (cf. Lankshear & Knobel, 2006).

Conclusion:

Perhaps, media education in Finland can be characterized as transdisciplinary research area. Outcome of transdisciplinary research is "knowledge coherence" (Lawrence & Després 2004, 400). The focus is on the organisation of knowledge around complex and heterogeneous domains, not so much on the disciplines and subjects. Transdisciplinary approaches see reality as a whole, which is not divisible into parts that are compatible with the multiple disciplinary perspectives. Transdisciplinary research is at the same time between disciplines, across disciplines and beyond any single discipline (ibid.).

Another important point is that transdisciplinary research is often action-oriented. It does not only cross disciplinary boundaries but makes links between theoretical approach and professional practice. This link helps to better understand actual world and practices. (Ibid.)

It is easy to see how transdisciplinary orientation is important in media education research. Practical pedagogy and research go hand in hand and share experiences with each others. At the same time research is connected to the decision-making processes in the society.

7 Dimension	General appreciation (and recommendations)
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Finland has proceeded in several areas mainly because of the governmental funding and researcher's interests on evaluative studies in the field which have turned into policies and practices of media education. This has happened slowly and still many things are at the initial stage, for example, media education at school, evaluation systems and small-scale fundings from several sources. Strongest actors can be found outside school system supporting also school: NGO's, after-school youth work and new official body MEKU together with media sector.

As conclusion at the European level we look forward how to empower new citizens to digital culture, how to encourage girls to technologies and productive activities in publicity and digital

culture and, how to organize, classify and put available already done research on media and information literacies. There is a continual need to inform policy makers and, make academic research visible and in dialogue with administration.

Recommendation 1:

Evaluative studies on the effectiveness of media education should be encouraged.

Especially, the effectiveness of media education has been studied relatively little from the perspective of youths' learning. There seems to be a need for this kind of evaluative research, even comparative one due to the continually increasing interest on media education around the world (see .f.ex. Carlsson & Culver 2013).

Recommendation 2:

Criterion should be developed for systematic collection of the best practices (study programs, learning materials etc.)

Media accountability, efficiency measures, performance and resources, media educational programs and actors need not only reporting, but evaluative studies for turning on as developments in policy level. Evaluation together with reflection and communication among main actors form the key for better policies on MIL which aim to foster wellbeing of citizens.

Recommendation 3:

Networking among European master programs on media education should be supported.

For fostering media education in all levels of schooling, master studies are needed for teachers, media professionals etc. at the national level and at the international level. In several countries those have been developed and, and their experiences and collaboration should be supported for further development of the education and research in media education.

8 Dimension	Good practices
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Finnish Society on Media Education: www.mediaeducation.fi

Finnish Society on Media Education manages services online on media education in Finnish, Swedish and in English. Moreover, the Society organizes seminars, publishes books and brochure. Most of them are available in Finnish only, but some of them are published in English as well:

<http://www.mediakasvatus.fi/tietoa/publications>

[Finnish Media Education - approaches in culture and education](#) (PDF)

[Finnish Media Education - Best Practises](#) (PDF)

[Decades of Finnish Media Education](#) (PDF)

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9 Dimension	References and resources
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