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FIRST TEACHERS, THEN STUDENTS: MEDIA EDUCATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Master's Dissertation

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Abstract

As more media continues to become available, there is an ever-growing need to consider how certain technologies and media messages affect users and society overall. The aim of this dissertation is to develop an understanding of media literacy in the Czech Republic and to investigate its significance within education, particularly teacher education. The research methods adopted for this study include an in-depth review of relevant media literacy literature, coupled with interviews from Czech Pedagogical Faculty members, and analyses of Czech national policy and university curricular documents. The findings from this work show that the main benefit of media literacy in primary and secondary schools is a non-hierarchical learning environment that encourages discussion, interaction, and critical thinking amongst students. Additionally, current media education policy in the Czech Republic is found to be ineffective. The main conclusion is that with more required media literacy courses or even a national standard for media literacy in teacher education programmes, the Czech Republic could improve teaching methods and present policy.

Keywords

Statement:

1. This statement is to confirm that this paper is a product of my own work and also to confirm that I used the listed sources in producing it.

2. I agree that the paper can be checked for research and studying purposes.

Prague, 02 June 2010   Nicole Kunzik

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ABBREVIATIONS

FEP	Framework Education Programme for Elementary Education
MEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports
SEP	School Education Programmes
SLS	Story Listening Systems
SPP	Centre for Teaching Practice
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UK	Charles University (Univerzita Karlova)
VUP	Research Institute of Education (Výzkumný ústav pedagogický)

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In most European countries, educational policies and practices have constantly developed to keep up with the changing demands of the twenty-first century. So much progress has been made in the area of computers and technology, that an average of 60 percent of all primary and secondary schools in Europe have computers and Internet access.[1] But though schools have many new media technologies, they do not always utilize them to their full advantage. Many fail to understand the benefits, not only of technologies, but of other sources of media as well.

Educators and media theorists suggest media literacy or media education[2] is one way to remedy the media-learning gap currently faced by schools. UNESCO defines media literacy as enabling 'people to interpret and make informed judgements as users of information and media, as well as to become skilful creators and producers of information and media messages in their own right'.[3] But this definition is not the only one available. The Alliance for a Media Literate America, for example, defines media literacy as empowering 'people to be both critical thinkers and creative producers of an increasingly wide range of messages using images, language, and sound'.[4] According to Kathleen Tyner, perception is the most significant factor in determining how media literacy is understood. But however the definition is stated, media literacy must always consider how media affects users. For schools this means teaching children about media's role in their daily lives, specifically how any multitude of media sources can shape the way they perceive the world, thereby also shaping the way they learn.

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[1] Eurydice, Key Data on Education in Europe, Brussels: Eurydice, 2005, <http://www.okm.gov.hu/doc/upload/200601/key_data_2005.pdf> [accessed 10 Feb 2010].
[2] Media literacy and media education are synonymous. Both terms will be used throughout this study, but have the same meaning. This is common in much of the literature about media literacy and media education.
[3] UNESCO, Information and Media Literacy, <http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=15886andURL_DO=DO_TOPICandURL_SECTION=201.html> [accessed 10 Feb 2010].
[4] AMLA, 'What is Media Literacy? AMLA's Short Answer and a Longer Thought' <http://www.medialit.org/reading_room/article247.html> [accessed 10 Feb 2010].

It is not difficult to find examples of primary and secondary schools that have successfully integrated media literacy into their curriculum. Many schools in Canada, Australia, and even some in the U.S. and the U.K. have already made media literacy and education part of their everyday curriculum.[5] These schools have recognized the importance of the subject and its potential to improve both learning and teaching. But still, many primary and secondary schools have not integrated media literacy into the curriculum, and if they have; they have not implemented it properly. An ever-growing assortment of media is changing learning across the globe, and it is thus important for schools to understand the unique benefits of introducing media literacy to children and why it is such a significant step in the future of education.

1.2 Research Focus

In the Czech Republic, the media environment is similar to other countries around the world. Thus, it is often the case that both parents are working to make ends meet, and children are 'left to negotiate information and values that come to them from the very media that keep them occupied'.[6] These media exist in many forms, from television and the Internet to metro and bus stop advertisements; Czech society is overflowing with a plethora of information. So 'while traditional reading and writing remain essential, students today also need to be able to "read" visual and electronic texts'.[7] Media literacy creates a better understanding of how media function and what the messages are that they send, and the simplest way to learn about this is to teach it to children beginning at a young age.

But who can teach media literacy in the Czech Republic and what are the current policies on teaching it, if any? Teachers in Canadian schools, which have already integrated media literacy into their curriculum, have media literate teachers.[8]

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[5] Diane Brown, Sandra Goetze, and Gretchen Schwarz, 'Teachers Need Media Literacy Too!' in *Media Literacy: Transforming Curriculum and Teaching*, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005, (hereafter, Brown, Goetze, and Schwartz, 'Teachers').

[6] Cheri Maynard, 'Media Literacy for a Future Teacher' in *Media Literacy: Transforming Curriculum and Teaching*, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005, p. 281, (hereafter, Maynard, 'Literacy').

[7] Brown, Goetze, and Schwartz, 'Teachers', p. 171.

[8] John J. Pungente, Barry Duncan, and Neil Andersen, 'The Canadian Experience: Leading the Way', in *Media Literacy: Transforming Curriculum and Teaching*, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.

But does the Czech Republic have any guidelines for teaching media literacy to future educators?

Larry Cuban[9] and others caution that teachers must be educated about media before it is added to the school curriculum. As was noted in the background sub-section, media technologies are often introduced to classrooms before teachers have any idea about how to teach them to students. This is a growing problem, and schools must face it as new media emerge.

Research in the field of media literacy is also new and much of it mourns the lack of research on teachers. As, Brown, Goetze and Schwartz lament, 'the effective teaching of media literacy in schools certainly requires the preparation of [primary and secondary] teachers. There remains a need for more opportunities of all kinds for both pre- and in-service teachers to learn about media literacy'.[10] To understand how media literacy functions in Czech primary and secondary schools, it is important to first examine how teachers are educated. Is there room for policy on this particular subject in teaching programmes, and could primary and secondary teaching methods improve as a result of adding media literacy to the curriculum?

The research I will conduct will concentrate on the value of media literacy in primary and secondary schools. The review of literature in chapter two will define media literacy in the Czech Republic and identify how it has been proven to improve teaching methods and students' critical thinking skills. I will then place media literacy in the regional context of the Czech Republic, by seeking out information on three levels of the Czech school system: primary, secondary, and tertiary schooling. This will require empirical research beyond that which will be supplied in the literature review. Specifically, I will research policies (including any existing media literacy policies) that control the curriculum at the primary and secondary level and the body that is responsible for keeping these policies in check. Then, I will examine teaching programmes for aspiring primary and secondary teachers to find out how they are taught, what they learn, and how they do or do not utilize media literacy skills. Because media information and use is growing in the Czech Republic, there is no better time to begin thinking about its impact on children and why it is ultimately an important area of study.

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[9] Larry Cuban is Professor of Education at Stanford University.

[10] Brown, Goetze, and Schwartz, 'Teachers', p. 177.

1.3 Specific Aims of this Research

Overall, my research aims to develop an understanding of media literacy and to investigate its potential benefits in Czech teacher education programmes. To do this it will be necessary to research traditional teaching methods, and it will be helpful to find out what problems schools face today, and how teachers and those working in the education sector think they can be improved. Further, this research will assess the impact media literacy has on teaching methods and classroom learning, and thus assess why more research is needed on the Czech school system to determine the function of media education in these areas. Two main types of research will be used in my study: an in-depth literature review and empirical analysis. Chapter 3, 'Designing a Way to Research the Czech School System and Media Related Policies' will give a more detailed account of my research strategy and methods.

Both the literature review and the research strategy will have three main aims in mind:

> 1) Identify the possible benefits of media literacy in primary and
>   secondary schools
> 2) Explore current teaching practices and education policies,
>   determining if deficiencies exist and thus where media literacy
>   might help
> 3) Make recommendations regarding teacher education programmes.

The first of these aims will be explored in the literature review and will seek an answer to the question 'how are children benefiting from media education in the classroom, and what role do teachers play in this?' The second aim will then be examined in my section on research findings (Chapter 4), which will reflect on the Czech education system, particularly teacher education programmes, teaching methods, and any media literacy courses that exist. And finally, my last aim, though it will be touched on in Chapter 4, will mainly be discussed in the 'Conclusions' section. My recommendations will be based on the findings of my literature review and further data analysis. In sum, all of this research will attempt to advance more knowledge about media education in the Czech Republic.

1.4 Value of Work

My research will suggest that media literate teachers are one of the most significant elements in successful media education and that without media literate educators, no one can teach media literacy in primary and secondary schools. There are many questions about how this applies to the Czech Republic. For example, how are teachers in the Czech Republic educated? And how much instruction do teacher education programmes provide on the subject of media literacy?

In the Czech Republic, current research has not yet evaluated the success of media literacy policy based on teacher education in the subject. Thus, my research is important because it explores the possibility that teachers do not receive adequate media literacy education, therefore creating a gap between policy and proper implementation. Both my literature review and my own data collection and findings present significant information on the subject, which has not been studied thoroughly before now.

The following chapters will present my research more in-depth and give the reader a better understanding of media literacy in the Czech Republic. First, background information about media literacy will be explored and relevant literature examined. The next chapter will expand on these ideas by researching the relationship between teaching methods and media literacy.

2. How Teaching Methods and Media Education Intersect: Reviewing the Literature on Media Literacy

2.1 Introduction

The following review of literature will examine what teaching methods are best for primary and secondary school students, what media literacy is and how it facilitates a better learning environment, and why media literate teachers are an important step toward better and more progressive teaching and learning. In subsection 1.3 of the first chapter, my overall research aims were described as follows: (1) to identify the possible benefits of media literacy in primary and

secondary schools; (2) to explore current teaching practices and education policies, determining if deficiencies exist and thus where media literacy might help; and (3) to make recommendations regarding teacher education programmes. The literature discussed here will focus on the first of these aims.

Exploring the advantages of media literacy for children will be a crucial part of my research. I will first examine why media literacy is necessary by discussing available teaching methods and their effects on learning. I will then focus on ways to improve teaching methods by utilizing common media sources and educating students on proper use and even creation. Most importantly, the literature will bring to light the importance of media literate teachers and create a framework for additional research that I will conduct, which questions the content of current teaching programmes for primary and secondary teachers.

At the end of this chapter it is hoped that a clearer understanding of teaching methods, classroom relationships and communications, and media literacy emerges, and that the reader is better informed about these areas. There should also be a justifiable need for further research into improved teaching methods and their application in the Czech Republic. The literature will begin by reviewing the significance of engaging students, thereby shying away from traditional 'hierarchical' teaching methods and then review the definitions of media literacy.

2.2 Focus on How Students Learn

What is best practice in teaching future primary and secondary school teachers? Effective teaching methods are often measured by how well teachers carry out the skills they've learned in their own classrooms. In other words, the results they achieve in primary and secondary schools determine the effectiveness of their teaching methods and subsequently their respective teaching programme. These results are based on a number of things, including: test scores relative to age and grade level, subject capabilities compared to peers,[11] amount of students that go on to higher education, and/or feedback from students and other teaching professionals. Teaching is not effective when scores are low, students do not go on to attend

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[11] How well students do in specific subjects, such as: math, science, reading, or writing, compared to other students on a national or international level.

universities, or the teachers themselves are viewed negatively. In the Czech Republic all of these are concerns, particularly enrolment in higher or tertiary education.[12]

Going a step further, it could be said that primary and secondary school teaching and the programmes that train future teachers are not effective if they do not stress children's engagement. Here, engagement implies interaction between the teacher, students, and the study materials. Without creating an environment that establishes discussion, collaboration, and constructive criticism, exercises related to teaching and learning are not able to reach their full potential.

This brings us back to the bigger issue: It is not what is taught, but how it is taught. This can also be translated to: it is not what students are learning, but how they are learning, how much they are learning, and how much they are personally benefiting from the teaching they receive. Teaching does not have to remain latent; it can become significantly improved if students are taught to learn differently.

2.3 The Role of Networks and the Value of Relationships

According to Michael Wesch, a media education specialist at Kansas State University in the United States, typical teaching is 'mass teaching'. It does not involve networks or links between students and teachers; instead one teacher is linked to an entire mass of students. This is illustrated in any university where students sit on one end of a classroom, while the teacher stands at the other and lectures. This often eliminates the possibility of student-student or teacher-student discussion.[13]

There are, however, other possible relationships teachers can develop with students in the classroom, which Figure 2.3 illustrates. The first is modelled on Metcalfe's Law of communications networks, whereby the number of connections within a group of people grows as more are added. Accordingly, 'if there are n people in a network, and the value of the network to each of them is proportional to the number of *other* users, then the total value of the network (to all the users) is

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[12] Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, 'White Paper on Tertiary Education', January 2009, <http://www.msmt.cz/uploads/bila_kniha/schvalena_bktv/White_Paper_on_Tertiary_Education_fin.pdf> [accessed 9 February 2010], (hereafter, MEYS, 'White Paper, 2009).

[13] Michael Wesch, Lecture at Manitoba University, 2008 <http://www.youtube.com/ watch?v= J4yApagnr0s &feature=related> [accessed 12 February 2010], (hereafter, Wesch, Lecture).

proportional to *n x (n -1)= n²- n'*.[14] Thus three people in a classroom can have more than just one relationship between students and teacher; there is an individual connection made by each. If we go beyond this theory and also examine Reed's Law, there are even more possible relationships that can develop in the classroom.

David P. Reed claims that Metcalfe underestimated the number of possible relationships within networks. Therefore, relationships must grow exponentially as $2^n- n- 1$, which grows as 2^n.[15] Reed's Law suggests that there are not only relationships within a group, but that those groups split and form sub-groups, which also form relationships within and between individuals involved in the network. Here, a classroom of three people not only have connections made back-and-forth between individuals, but the group as a whole also forms one large connection. So how can connections like this be made possible within a classroom?

Figure 2.3: Possible Relationships in the Classroom

Teacher	Teacher and Students	Teacher and Students
Mass Teaching **1 relationship**	**Metcalfe's Law** **3 relationships**	**Reed's Law**[16] **4 relationships**
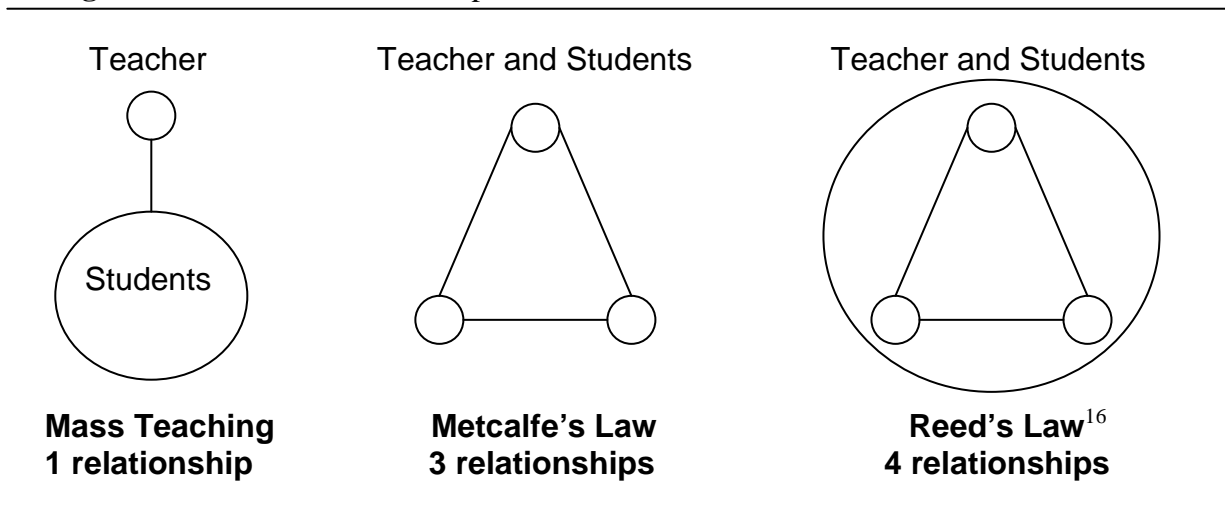
[14] Carl Shapiro and Hal R. Varian, *Information Rules: A Strategic Guide to the Network Economy*, Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1999, p. 184.
[15] David P. Reed 'That Sneaky Exponential— Beyond Metcalfe's Law to the Power of Community Building', <http://www.reed.com/dpr/locus/gfn/reedslaw.html> [accessed 9 March 2010], (hereafter, Reed, 'Exponential').
[16] Each circled set of connections can then go on to form a new sub-network outside the classroom environment.

First, let's look again at the current problem: Teachers are the sole disseminators of information in the classroom. Too often teachers present material from their own point of view, as if it is a given or fact. Faith Rogow, Head of Insighters Educational Consulting, explains the downside of one-sided teaching is that students are able to simply memorize and repeat, rather than analyze and critique what is being learned.[17] Educators should, of course, give their views, but students' perspectives must also be considered. This is where Reed's Law comes into play. Students may learn from school-supplied textbooks and in classroom teaching, but they also learn from the Internet, television, newspapers, advertisements, and any number of varying media messages. Because these methods of learning and communication change and develop daily, students are becoming more and more equipped with new ways of finding information and also disseminating it to others. They are forming new relationships with each other and forming their own networks, through which messages are processed, produced, and conveyed. Thus, connections within a classroom are not made solely between the teacher and a mass of students. The new media heavy environment has made 'mass teaching' obsolete.

2.4 What is Media Literacy?

So if students are now learning outside the classroom, then what does this mean for teachers? In democratic countries with almost unlimited access to media such as the Czech Republic, teachers essentially must consider that though they are the primary source of information in the classroom, they are not the only medium through which students obtain information. They must also consider that despite the existence of media and new channels for learning, most students are not learning to their full potential. Now, more than ever before, students are more likely to tune out of classroom lectures, gather information elsewhere, and regurgitate only what is necessary for examinations and other requirements.[18] Furthermore, the information

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[17] Faith Rogow, 'Terrain in Transition: Reflections on the Pedagogy of Media Literacy in Education' in *Media Literacy: Transforming Curriculum and Teaching*, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005 (hereafter, Rowgow, 'Transition'), p. 285.
[18] Rowgow, 'Transition'.

students receive from various forms of media is not always correct and/or ascertained in the most efficient way possible.[19]

To curb these problems, a better understanding of media should be part of the curriculum in primary and secondary schools. To this effect, Cheri Maynard, a mother and pedagogical student at Appalachian State University in the United States, contends that becoming involved in the media-influenced areas of children's lives in 'an educated manner is an answer, maybe the only answer. It is the responsibility of parents and teachers to know what is filling the time and the heads of the young people who look to us for guidance and education. Media literacy is essential in the process'.[20]

Without media literacy, students, parents, and teachers cannot communicate on the same playing field; they are not able to comprehend the same messages, technologies, and to a large extent the information they get hold of is acutely disparate. But why does media literacy help? What exactly does it mean for students, parents, and teachers to be media literate?

The European Commission's Audiovisual and Media Policies shed some light on the potential media has for the development of society. Here, media literacy is defined as:

> The ability to access the media, to understand and to critically evaluate different aspects of the media and media contents and to create communications in a variety of contexts. Media literacy relates to all media, including television and film, radio and recorded music, print media, the Internet and all other new digital communication technologies. It is a fundamental competence not only for the young generation but also for adults and elderly people, for parents, teachers and media professionals. The Commission considers media literacy as an important factor for active citizenship in today's information society.[21]

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[19] Cathy Collison and Janis Campbell, *Using Media in the Classroom: Middle School*, Grand Rapids, MI: Frank Schaffer, 2005.

[20] Maynard, 'Literacy', p. 281.

[21] European Commission, 'Audiovisual and Media Policies: Media Literacy', <http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/media_literacy/index_en.htm> [accessed 22 March 2010].

This explanation asserts that media literacy is not only about accessing media, but achieving the ability to analyse and produce media as well. It points out what 'media' refers to in detail, and concludes that media literacy is about being an 'active citizen'. But while all three of these details might be true in the eyes of the European Commission, they are heavily debated elsewhere. Thus, we must consider the ongoing debate about what constitutes media literacy, its importance, and its application in the Czech Republic.

2.5 What Is Media Literacy in the Czech Republic?

The most commonly used definition of media literacy in the Czech Republic is similar to that of the European Commission, but goes a step further. According to Jan Jirák, Deputy Head of the Centre for Media Studies at Charles University, it also includes 'the ability "to use" media in the most enriching (and least harming way)'.[22] Here, there is greater focus on how media literacy can enhance the lives of media users. In other words, this definition seeks not only: access, analysis, and production, but also incorporates the advantages of proper use. These could be anything from quickly and efficiently finding research articles online, to being aware of what major media conglomerates produce local news.[23] The key point is that citizens should be knowledgeable about media and use it for the benefit of themselves and society as a whole.

Truthfully, the definition of media literacy used in the Czech Republic could be applied to any country. In the UK, for example, the British Film Institute's media education curriculum statements outline a similar understanding,[24] which focuses on a 'theoretical framework that could be applied to the whole range of contemporary media and to older media such as literature as well as enabling students to realise the connections between them and to transfer insights from one area to another'.[25]

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[22] Jan Jirák 'Media Literacy Questionnaire', <http:// ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/media_literacy/docs/.../25a_03_33_ch_uni_cz.pdf> [accessed 22 March 2010], (hereafter, Jirák, 'Media').

[23] Donna Walker Tileston, *What Every Teacher Should Know About Media and Technology*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2004.

[24] Cary Bazalgette, *Primary Media Education: A Curriculum Statement.* London: BFI, 1989.

[25] Deborah Wilcox, 'Media Literacy Paper' in The United Kingdom Office of Communications Online Site,

Because media is not confined by borders in most of the world, there is no definition of media literacy that is wholly country specific.

The many definitions of media literacy that exist can sometimes make it difficult to decipher the most applicable. Gretchen Schwarz, Professor in the School of Teaching and Curriculum Leadership at Oklahoma State University, determines:

> Perceptions of media literacy depend on who is doing the perceiving. Some see media literacy as simply an antidote to or defense against evils like tobacco and drugs or materialism; some see media literacy as primarily empowering students as critical thinkers throughout the curriculum; and some envision media literacy as an active engagement with social justice and equity.[26]

These multiple understandings also cause one of the biggest problems: confusing media literacy with different types of literacy. Among others, these include: information, technological, visual, and computer literacy.[27] It could be said that media literacy encompasses all of these, or that it forms an umbrella definition,[28] but it is most certainly not limited to any of them specifically. In the Czech Republic, as well as other countries, it is difficult to say what media literacy is and what it is not. As Schwarz claims, 'perception' is a significant part of determining how media literacy functions, how it will be used, and for what purpose.

If the most common definition perceived in the Czech Republic includes media: access, analysis, production, and benefits to the user and to society overall, is this the most pertinent definition for the purposes of this paper? This definition can be used to examine access to learning, including: technologies and different sources of print or visual media. It can also be used to see if citizens are truly aware of how to analyse media and the importance this has in their lives. Additionally, it can ascertain

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<http://www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/strategymedialit/responses/ah/hhs.pdf> [accessed 24 April 2010].

[26] Gretchen Schwarz, 'Overview: What is Media Literacy, Who Cares, and Why?' in *Media Literacy: Transforming Curriculum and Teaching*, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005 (hereafter, Schwarz, 'Media'), p. 12.

[27] Kathleen Tyner, *Literacy in a Digital World: Teaching and Learning in the Age of Information*, Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 1998, (herafter, Tyner, *Literacy*).

[28] Carmen Luke, 'New Times, New Media: Where to Media Education?' in *Media International Australia Incorporating Culture and Policy*, 101, 2001, pp. 87-104.

if skills for media creation are apparent to citizens and how they can benefit from these. Most importantly it can see where deficiencies in media education and even general education lie. Therefore, media literacy will be understood here not only as achieving access and learning to properly analyse and produce media, but also obtaining these skills in a way that enriches the lives of media users both individually and as a group.[29]

2.6 Voices of Dissent in Media Education

Media literacy or media education is best absorbed through proper teaching. It is therefore essential to include media literacy in the primary and secondary school curriculum, so that children are afforded the opportunity to learn about media's impact on their lives and society and how it can improve their learning environment and the processes by which they gather information. Many countries already contain some policies regarding media literacy in primary and secondary schools, however there are still many obstacles to successful integration.

One hurdle stems from negative opinions about media's impact on children. To this end, media theorists like Jean Kilbourne and Neil Postman tout television and computers as an unnecessary evil, or something that would be better disregarded than integrated into classrooms. According to their theories, childhood is increasingly disappearing because television and the Internet introduce the vulgarities of our current society[30] to children at a much younger age than ever before.[31] Furthermore, Postman cautions that the introduction of media in the classroom has become an alternate curriculum, which educators should oppose, lest children become consumed by the forces of the media and educators themselves become obsolete in comparison to new forms of media technology.[32] Additionally some theories claim, 'many parents

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[29] Media cannot be properly used if only individual citizens benefit at the expense of others. Thus, here media literacy means that individuals are able to decipher what is most beneficial for everyone involved in any particular form of media.

[30] These include: crime, sex, drugs, alcohol, and social and political issues of an adult nature.

[31] Eugene Rubin, 'Neil Postman: Stirring Up Trouble About Technology, Language, and Education' in *Aurora*, 1989,
<http://aurora.icaap.org/index.php/aurora/article/view/62/74> [accessed 27 March 2010].

[32] Neil Postman, 'Informing Ourselves to Death' in a Speech given at a meeting of the German Informatics Society (Gesellschaft fuer Informatik) on October 11, 1990 in

object to having teachers examine such value-laden subjects, and many teachers believe they are already overburdened by expectations'.[33] In sum, not everyone is enthusiastic about the media's role in society, especially where children and schools are concerned.

Condemnations by media critics have been more common as new technologies and sources of information have become available. Following this, the assumption that media are harmful to children 'has crept into educational materials in subtle ways. For example, many media literacy texts use the definite article in conjunction with the word "media," implying that "the media" is a monolithic whole, a singular entity, or worse, some kind of connected conspiracy'.[34] The word 'the' ignores the complexity of media, which should be read as plural.

Most theories that denounce media have not looked at all the facts. Besides thinking of media as 'the media', they overlook the crucial fact that critical thinking needs to be applied for any improvement in learning about media to surface. Ultimately, 'teaching *against* media is not the same as teaching *about* media. Teaching students to be critical of media is not the same as teaching them to think critically'.[35] This, according to Kathleen Tyner,[36] is what media literacy must be about, it involves not only thinking critically, but teaching students to think this way as well.[37]

The choice to include media in primary and secondary schools is not black and white. In other words, schools cannot disregard media altogether, but they should not embrace it fully either. What media literacy proposes is a synthesis between critique and praise that teaches children to understand the complexities of technologies, advertising, communication, and generally the development of society today. Without media literacy or media education we cannot even begin to comprehend how media impacts our daily lives. In the Czech Republic, as well as other countries, critics of media must acknowledge the positive effects of media literacy and the potential it has to change teaching and empower critical thinking.

Stuttgart, sponsored by IBM-Germany.
<http://www.mat.upm.es/~jcm/postman-informing.html> [accessed 27 March 2010].
[33] Schwarz, 'Media', p. 11.
[34] Rowgow, 'Transition', p. 284.
[35] Rowgow, 'Transition', p. 284.
[36] Kathleen Tyner is Assistant Professor in the Department of Radio, Television, and Film at the University of Texas.
[37] Tyner, *Literacy*.

2.7 Teaching Methods

For students, parents, and teachers, media literacy creates discussion, promotes individual reflexivity, and provokes new methods of learning. One reason for this is that it transcends the concept of traditional or 'mass' teaching, which is still popular in most areas of Europe, including the Czech Republic.[38] Whenever media literacy is part of classroom teaching, a more collaborative learning process also exists. And this, according to Sonia Livingstone,[39] 'may enhance children's learning more in a heterarchical than in a hierarchical context'.[40]

In her ongoing research in technology and literacy development, Justine Cassell[41] demonstrates how a media technology called 'Story Listening Systems' (SLS) encourages primary level students to step outside the typical 'expert' and 'novice' or hierarchical relationship. SLS, utilizes a virtual child, projected on a screen that can both listen to children's stories and tell its own. The media technology encourages children to ask questions, interact, and develops their literacy and writing skills. As Cassell confirms:

> SLS demonstrate the importance of the social context of peer collaboration, its playful, spontaneous, personally meaningful dimensions, and its ability to evoke a desire to make oneself understood. All of these dimensions enter into the sociocultural understanding of learning, whereby the very fact of monitoring mutual understanding, of watching for how another understands what one has

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[38] Dorothy Marcic and Carol Pendergast, 'Perceptions of Faculty and Students towards Case Teaching in Czechoslovakia: A Coming Velvet Paradigm Shift?' in *The Journal of Management Development*, 13 (7), 1994, pp. 12-22.

[39] Sonia Livingstone is Professor of Social Psychology and Head of the Department of Media and Communications at the London School of Economics and Political Science. She is also the current director of the research network: EU Kids Online II, 'the European Commission's Safer Internet Programmme'.

[40] Sonia Livingstone, 'Chapter 3: Learning and Education', *Children and the Internet*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009 (hereafter, Livingstone, *Children*), p. 85.

[41] Justine Cassell is the Director of the Center for Technology & Social Behavior, and a full Professor in the Departments of Communication Studies and Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at Northwestern University.

just said, changes one's understanding of one's own words or actions.[42]

SLS is just one example of how media orientation in the classroom facilitates a different kind of learning experience, one that motivates children to 'learn, unlearn, and relearn' without the help of traditional teaching methods.[43]

Media literacy does not necessarily have to include technologies as advanced as SLS to see changes in teaching and learning. In truth, students must simply be presented with the opportunity to interact and form networks that are more akin to Reed's Law of Communications Networks. For example, if students have access to newspapers (digital or print) and television, then they can, theoretically, read both visual and printed texts. Because media literacy requires not only access, but also analysis, these texts must be crucially questioned in order to read them properly. To this end, Ladislaus Semali[44] declares: 'one broader goal of such critical education is to enable students to understand and critique the curriculum of media in order to conceptualize social/economic justice more clearly…Questioning texts of all kinds makes possible a more adequate and accurate reading of the world'.[45] Often these critical questions take place during class discussions, where students and teachers can also offer constructive criticism on one another's judgements. Thus, even on a small scale (without the use of new digital technologies such as SLS) media literacy encourages a different type of teaching and learning than that gained by 'mass teaching'.

2.8 Impact on Learning Across Subjects

In addition to teaching methods, media literacy also offers other benefits to primary and secondary school children. In classroom learning it has been recognized as an invaluable resource across subjects. It is 'pertinent in sociology, psychology,

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[42] Justine Cassell, 'Towards a Model of Technology and Literacy Development: Story Listening Systems' in *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 25, 2004, pp. 75-105, (p. 101).

[43] Alvin Toffler, 'Official Website of Alvin and Heidi Toffler (Futurists)', <http://www.alvintoffler.net/?fa=galleryquotes> [accessed 26 March 2010].

[44] Ladislaus Semali is an Associate Professor of Education at Pennsylvania State University.

[45] Ladislaus Semali, 'Why Media Literacy Matters in American Schools' in *Media Literacy: Transforming Curriculum and Teaching*, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005, p. 37.

cultural studies, and other areas that contribute to a richer understanding of both students and their educational and social contexts'.[46] For example, when media literacy is integrated in social studies or humanities related subjects, specific objectives for student performance may include: identifying how social scientists gather information and present their work; finding and utilizing primary and secondary sources, including online media, news, and interviews; and analysing information by locating main ideas, making inferences, drawing conclusions, and generally displaying a critical voice.[47]

The importance of media literacy across subjects or as a cross-curricular[48] teaching method is further exemplified by Renee Hobbs'[49] account of a teacher who, in order to teach her students about politics, had them keep 'track of how much time the media spent reporting on who was ahead and behind in the polls (the "horse-race" style coverage) as compared with providing information on candidates' policies on controversial issues'.[50] Discussing these media issues in the classroom enhances children's understanding of subjects already taught. And these can be politics, but they can also be as diverse as physical education. For instance, the effect of 'TV watching on students' physical health' is an important issue to consider and discuss directly with students.[51] Such conversations open up a more personalized dialogue, where 'students learn what they care about, from people they care about and who, they know, care about them'.[52] They are active participants in what they learn and carry away new information and skills.

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[46] Brown, Goetze, and Schwarz, 'Teachers', p. 173.

[47] Texas Education Agency, 'Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies' in *Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 2, Chapter 113* , 1998, <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter113/index.html> [accessed 28 March 2010].

[48] Cross-curricular denotes a subject, which can be taught in conjunction with other subjects. Here, media literacy can be taught together with other subjects such as: math, science, or art.

[49] Renee Hobbs is an Associate Professor in the Department of Broadcasting Telecommunications and Mass Media at Temple University and is a cofounder of the Alliance for a Media Literate America.

[50] Renee Hobbs, 'Media Literacy and the K-12 Content Areas' in *Media Literacy: Transforming Curriculum and Teaching*, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005, p. 79.

[51] Brown, Goetze, and Schwartz, 'Teachers', p. 173.

[52] Barbara Harrell Carson, 'Thirty Years of Stories: The Professor's Place in Student's Memories' in *Change*, 21, 1996, pp.11-17.

Michael Wesch suggests the effect of media literacy on cross-curricular learning is one that creates 'significance'[53]. In most classrooms in the Czech Republic, so-called learning is not about the value of actually learning new things, it is about what will be on the test or how many points an assignment is worth. Students learn only what they have to and do not value the information they receive. To remedy this, Wesch suggests teachers use media literacy to create two types of meaningful significance: 1) semantic and 2) personal. The former refers to how subjects, such as math and history relate to the world within a broader context than simply the knowledge required for an upcoming test or project deadline. The latter considers how students, themselves, relate to math, history, etc. and their place in the world.

To implement best practice, or otherwise fully engage students in learning, Wesch determines it is appropriate to:

> 1) Find a good narrative to provide relevance and context for learning (addresses the semantic), 2) Create a learning environment that values and leverages the learners themselves (addresses the personal), and 3) Do both in a way that realizes and leverages the existing media environment (And therefore allows students to realize and leverage the existing media environment) so that students can become engaged, realize the web is all around us, [and] realize they are not passive observers.[54]

If media literacy is implemented properly in Czech primary and secondary schools, then students will become more engaged, active in their own learning, and find information that is significant and relevant to their own lives. Media literacy thus creates a new platform for learning that goes beyond traditional teaching methods, it allows students to teach and learn from each other and the world around them.

2.9 The Importance of Media Literate Teachers

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[53] Wesch, Lecture.
[54] Wesch, Lecture.

At present, there is no shortage of media access in Czech primary and secondary schools. Media technologies such as computers are in ready supply in most EU countries, and for every ten students there is at least one computer; some schools have one for every five students.[55] But just as sitting at home to talk to friends on social networking sites or playing computer games are not a benefit to learning, simply giving children the opportunity to use computers in the classroom is not either. What good do computers and other technologies do if they are not integrated into the everyday classroom experience? And what good do teachers accomplish if they do not fully grasp the media technologies that are present in their classrooms and in the daily lives of their students?

An overwhelming amount of 'public discourse focuses more on the introduction of technology than on the introduction of new teaching practices in the hopes of benefiting pupils'.[56] Thus, many primary and secondary schools are content with teaching children how to use basic media related technologies such as: Internet search engines, Excel charts, and simple photo editing software. This places the focus on access rather than use and neglects the cross-curricular potential of media literacy, as well as its capacity to improve teaching methods. As Livingstone declares:

> If the conditions for high-quality [media] use (including teacher
> training, curriculum redesign, supporting collaborative learning
> practices) are neglected, if children remain unclear regarding
> searching, navigating and evaluating online content or, worst, if ICT
> provision is permitted to substitute good teaching in the classroom,
> then children's education will not benefit.[57]

Because media literacy is not only about the benefits of media access, analysis, and production, but also improving teaching methods in a non-hierarchical fashion, it should not be made to take a back seat to technology provisions. 'Media Education' cannot be truly cross-curricular if there is less emphasis on analysis, production, and teaching, and more emphasis on access or use alone.

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[55] Eurydice, *Key Data on Education in Europe*, 2005
<http://www.okm.gov.hu/doc/upload/200601/key_data_2005.pdf> [accessed 8 April 2010], p. 67.
[56] Livingstone, *Children*, pp. 65-66.
[57] Livingstone, *Children*, p. 80.

For media literacy to become a reality in Czech primary and secondary schools, teachers must understand what it is and how to teach it. Students cannot learn to integrate media education into their lives unless schools and teachers facilitate it. Thus, teachers' media literacy is a substantial concern. But how much education should teachers have in media literacy and how should they then teach it in primary and secondary schools? Because most people in the Czech Republic now obtain information from image-based sources such as the Internet or television, it doesn't make sense to 'continue to relegate media literacy to a nice, but optional classroom enhancement. To the contrary, the most promising way to address the changes with which we live is to integrate media literacy into existing core subject areas across the curriculum'.[58] This addresses the debate concerning how media literacy should be taught in primary and secondary schools, but the question still remains regarding how it should be taught to teachers.

Literature regarding media literacy for educators almost unanimously agrees there is not enough being done. This is a global problem that extends into the Czech Republic as well. The need for teacher training is echoed by those who recognize 'more formal professional development for in-service teachers and the development of media literacy curriculum at colleges of education' is necessary to see positive changes and progress overall.[59] But in the Czech Republic these changes are difficult, especially when it comes to university level teaching programmes. According to Family and School Magazine (*Rodina a škola*), teaching programmes do not usually include media literacy training, and if they do it is not uniform.[60] If this is true, it means that teachers often receive very different concepts of what media literacy is and how it can be used to facilitate classroom learning.

Additionally, while there are some outside organizations and educational centres that provide media literacy courses in the Czech Republic, there are very few courses or programmes available in public universities.[61] As a result, many teachers do not know what media literacy is or how it can benefit their students and improve their own teaching capabilities. Most often, 'teachers use video as a babysitter or

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[58] Rowgow, 'Transition', p. 183.

[59] A. Garrison, 'Trends and Issues Statement' in *Media Matters*, 11 (4), 2000, p. 1.

[60] Radim Wolák and Jan Jirak, 'Mediální výchovy se bojíme zbytečně' in *Rodina a škola*, 4, 21 April 2006 <http://www.portal.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=9350> [accessed 10 April 2010], (hereafter, Wolák and Jirak, *Rodina*).

[61] Wolák and Jirak, *Rodina*.

computers as a reward',[62] and do not understand the true potential for discussion and critique media technologies offer.

Media literacy amongst primary and secondary school children is contingent on teachers' media literacy. Thus, teacher education programmes must be examined to see where deficiencies in teaching methods and media literacy skills lie. What is the most significant problem in the Czech Republic regarding teacher education and media literacy? What are the national policies on media literacy, if any, and how are they enforced for future teachers of the subject? To learn 'to use media effectively is not difficult, but neither is it self-evident. Educators will need the time and training to integrate media and media literacy into what they do, or they will continue to use media the way they generally use it at home, that is, for entertainment'.[63] Now the Czech Republic must look at how media literacy and education is lacking, and find a plausible way to incorporate it into teacher education.

2.10 Conclusions: The Need for More Research

The review of media literacy literature has discovered that media education can be a valuable tool for teaching and learning in primary and secondary schools. First, the measures of effective teaching are reviewed and found to be based mainly on test scores and the number of students who eventually qualify for enrolment in tertiary education. The latter is of particular concern to the Czech Republic, whose tertiary education numbers are lower than most other EU countries.[64] The literature suggests that teaching methods might be contributing to ineffective teaching and that engaging students in lessons would establish more drive to learn amongst primary and secondary school students.[65]

The relationships that teachers might form in the classroom to establish engagement are also revealed in the literature. Currently, the practice of 'mass teaching' is prevalent in Czech schools, but communications theorists suggest the number of possible relationships formed via the classroom grow exponentially. [66] Thus everyone is somehow interconnected in the learning process, and most

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[62] Rowgow, 'Transition', p. 187.
[63] Rowgow, 'Transition', p. 287.
[64] MEYS, 'White Paper', 2009.
[65] Wesch, Lecture.
[66] Reed, 'Exponential'.

educational theorists shun teaching in a hierarchical manner because it does not allow students the opportunity to think critically.[67]

The possibility of a heterarchical learning environment is idealized by the literature, not only for the collaboration and critical analysis it promotes, but also because it acknowledges that today's learning environment is no longer one-sided. In other words, teachers are not the only source of information. The world outside the classroom is full of information, and as a result students often claim to learn more from friends, television, and the Internet than they do from teachers.[68] To remedy this problem, teachers and students in primary and secondary school classrooms must understand the benefits of media literacy.

Globally, there is no overwhelmingly agreed upon definition of media literacy, and the literature highlights that multiple definitions can cause confusion.[69] One of the biggest problems is that schools do not prescribe to one idea regarding how media education should be carried out.[70] The most prevalent description of media literacy used in the Czech Republic by media theorists includes access, analysis, and creation of media, as well as user enrichment.[71] And while there have been critics of media's role in schools and children's lives, teaching against media overlooks the benefits of thinking critically about media.[72] Educators, policy-makers, and theorists contend that media literacy offers children the opportunity to become active participants in their own learning and to take more away from everyday classroom lessons.

The relevant conclusion is that somehow media literacy should be a bigger part of the primary and secondary school curriculum. But is this tangibly possible? Essentially, what steps must take place for this to become a reality? The first step is researching what policies already exist on the subject; specifically the role media education currently plays in schools. The literature also suggests media literacy begins with teachers. Thus, the second step is researching how teachers are educated in the Czech Republic and more specifically how they are educated in the subject of media literacy, if at all.

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[67] Rowgow, 'Transtition'.
[68] Livingstone, *Children*, p. 71.
[69] Tyner, *Literacy*.
[70] Wolák and Jirak, *Rodina*.
[71] Jirák, 'Media'.
[72] Rowgow, 'Transition' and Tyner, *Literacy*.

To arrive at a deeper understanding of teaching methods and the potential of media education in the Czech Republic more research is needed on current education and media policies at the national level and also on policies regarding teaching programmes in universities. The next stage of my research will define a strategy for further empirical data collection, highlighting the methods used, the framework for analysis, and any limitations to this.

3. Designing a way to Research the Czech School System and Media Related Policies

3.1 Introduction

My research has three main aims that point to the importance of media literacy in the Czech Republic: (1) to identify the possible benefits of media literacy in primary and secondary schools; (2) to explore current teaching practices and education policies, determining if deficiencies exist and thus where media literacy might help; and (3) to make recommendations regarding teacher education programmes. The first objective was discussed in the literature review, and the second and third will be covered by the research strategy carried out in chapter four with additional recommendations provided in the fifth chapter, 'Conclusions'. But in this chapter I will first evaluate the significance of media literacy research.

Many educators, theorists, and even government bodies have acknowledged the importance of research on media literacy. The European Commission, for example, assures us 'media-literate people will be able to exercise informed choices, understand the nature of content and services and take advantage of the full range of opportunities offered by new communications technologies'.[73] Thus, more research in the field can only help, not hinder, any country willing to make changes that might facilitate media education.

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[73] European Commission, 'AVMSD—What is it?' (November 2007) <http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/reg/avms/index_en.htm> [accessed 7 March 2010].

As the literature review pointed out in chapter two, there is without a doubt more research that needs to be conducted on teaching media literacy to teachers. Because while 'there are clearly grounds to support efforts to enhance media literacy—whether via an educational curriculum directed at children' or through some other means, there is little research on teachers.[74] And without this research it is impossible to say whether media literacy policies, even if they do exist, are truly effective. What can primary and secondary school teachers expose their students to if they have not been exposed to it in their own learning?

In the Czech Republic, there is no truly comprehensive research that investigates teaching programmes within the context of media literacy. Therefore, my research aims to cover new ground by synthesizing the literature review findings with current policies on media education, teaching methods, and practices. In this way, theory and practice can together form a better understanding of issues in Czech teaching programmes and media education policy.

This chapter will justify my reasoning for conducting research, identify my research strategy, and illustrate the structure that this will take. By adopting a strategy for research I will also need to gather and analyse data, thus I will describe how I chose to go about this and will also detail any limitations I encountered during this process. The subsections that follow succinctly outline my research strategy and offer support for its utilization.

3.2 Research Design

The first step in choosing a research strategy is to clarify what I want to discover. In the literature review I discovered that media literacy improves teaching methods and also helps primary and secondary school children learn. I want to know if media education can be successful in the Czech Republic, so I need to first research how the very people that will teach the subject are educated, what the problems are in current teaching methods, and propose a way for media education to improve the current situation. But what is the best way to develop a strategy for this?

Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin claim that to begin research the first essential guideline is to choose a methodology or 'a way of thinking about and

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[74] Livingstone, *Children*, p. 188.

studying social reality'.[75] One way to think about this reality is objectively, viewing the social as natural and not interpretive. This way of viewing the world can be quantified and is usually, though not always, associated with branches of science like physics or chemistry, where data can be tried and tested oblivious to the interpretations of outside actors.[76] But my research does not fit this way of thinking; instead it 'favours the alternative view of social reality which stresses the importance of the subjective experience of individuals in the creation of the social world'.[77] Thus, I want to interpret teacher education based on the theoretical information provided in the literature review. In other words, I will make a case for media literacy to fill the gaps left by inefficient teaching methods and university and national policy. The result will not be quantifiable, but will be qualitative in nature, interpreting current policies from a pro-media literacy perspective and also taking account of how educators perceive the current system.

3.2.1 Social Constructivism

My perspective on the qualitative research I will conduct stems from social constructivism. Progressive education theorists have defined social constructivism as a method by which students construct their own personal understanding of learning from experience. The main tenants of social constructivism in an educational setting are outlined in Table 3.2, which contrasts constructivist learning with more traditional forms. Accordingly, 'constructivism — particularly in its "social" forms — suggests that the learner is much more actively involved in a joint enterprise with the teacher of creating ("constructing") new meanings',[78] than he or she would be in a traditional learning environment.

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[75] Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, 'Introduction' in *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for developing Grounded Theory 2nd edn*, London: Sage Publications, 1998, pp. 1-13, (p. 4).

[76] Michael D. Myers, Qualitative Research in Information Systems, MISQ Discovery' <http://www.misq.org/discovery/misq_isworld/> [accessed 29 April 2010].

[77] Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion, and Keith R.B. Morrison, *Research Methods in Education*, London: Routledge, 2000, p.7, (hereafter, Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, *Research*).

[78] Educational Broadcasting Program, 'Constructivism as a Paradigm for Learning and Teaching' in *Concept to Classroom: A Series of Workshops*, 2004 <http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/concept2class/constructivism/index_sub1.html> [accessed 29 April 2010], (hereafter, Educational Broadcasting Program, 'Constructivism').

Traditional Teaching Methods	Constructivist Teaching Methods
Fixed curriculum and strict Adherence to teacher guided lessons	Curriculum is fixed, but with some variation for student opinions, questions, and ideas
Textbooks are main source of material for learning	Materials include textbooks, other primary sources, and also secondary sources of information
Learning is formed by repetition and memorization	Learning is formed by what students already know and by interaction and discussion
Teachers are the main disseminator of information	Teachers help students construct knowledge by forming a dialogue
Students usually perform work alone	Students usually complete work with a group

Table 3.2: Difference between two main types of teaching methods [79]

My first research aim and the crux of my literature review sought 'to identify the possible benefits of media literacy in primary and secondary schools'. I found that one of the greatest benefits media education offers is communication in the classroom, essentially meaning: discussion and interaction between students and teacher or a more social constructivist model of learning. I concluded that learning, which does not include these types of interactions, could benefit from introducing media literacy to the curriculum. To research the topic further I need to learn more about how teachers are educated, and if the methods they learn do or do not contain elements akin to social constructivism.

An 'overarching challenge constructivism presents to teachers and teacher educators is the formidable task of translating a learning theory into a theory of teaching, which in turn raises questions about what teachers need to know and be able to do'.[80] I want to analyse current teaching policies, curriculum, and methods in

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[79] Educational Broadcasting Program, 'Constructivism'.
[80] Ismat Abdal-Haqq, 'Constructivism in Teacher Education: Considerations for Those Who Would Link Practice to Theory' in *ERIC Digest*, 1998 <http://www.ericdigests.org/1999-3/theory.htm> [accessed 5 May, 2010].

teacher training programmes from a social constructivist perspective, and combine my findings with the research from my literature review to see where media literacy can improve learning. The most efficient way to do this is through policy analysis of the current education system at the national and individual university level.

3.2.2 Policy Analysis

Despite having many definitions, the term 'policy' is, at its core, 'a course of action intended to accomplish some end'.[81] So it should follow that analysis of policy determines if a proposed end is successful. But there are many theories on the nature of policy analysis. For instance, some approach it as a cost-benefit analysis to deduce which policies are most advantageous.[82] Others insist it must identify alternative policies and determine their effectiveness.[83] And still others claim the tenants are different depending on the purpose it is meant to serve.[84] But, as Randall Bovbjerg argues, 'it is not helpful to try to pigeon-hole a particular analytical effort along a continuum between true policy analysis and pure social science'.[85] With this in mind, my research will not claim to encompass all types and methods of policy analysis. It will claim to analyse the current Czech education system and university policies as they pertain to teaching methods, practice, and media literacy.

Policy analysis, however, is not without criticism. The many conflicting definitions and multiple meanings of the term have also presented multiple drawbacks. Some policy analysis is so complex or concentrated on costs that it 'seems to have a different purpose in mind than deciding whether a particular product is usefully analytical'.[86] Other criticisms highlight policy analyses failure to fully expose and fix a given problem. As Yehezkel Dror observes: 'Changes in policy making will be slow, inconsistent, and sporadic. Even slow and minor changes in the quality of policy making are a tremendous achievement when compared with the history of

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[81] H. Hugh Heclo, 'Policy Analysis' in *British Journal of Political Science*, 2.1 January 1972, pp. 83-108 (p. 84).

[82] Deborah Stone, Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making, New York: W.W. Norton, 2002.

[83] Robert Harris, 'Policy Analysis and Policy Development' in *The Social Service Review*, 47.3, September 1973, pp. 360-372.

[84] Lisa Patel Stevens, '(Re)Framing Policy Analysis' in *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 52.1, September 2008, pp. 70-73, (hereafter, Stevens, 'Analysis').

[85] Randall R. Bovbjerg, 'What is Policy Analysis?' in *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 5.1 1985, pp. 154-158 (p. 155), (hereafter, Bovbjerg, 'Policy').

[86] Bovbjerg, 'Policy', p. 155.

human stupidity'.[87] Often policy analysts must stay with a problem for a longer time than their analysis allows. But my research only analyses the current state of the education system, and does not test alternative future policies. Ultimately the purpose of my work and my chosen research strategy is to analyse current problems in teacher education and suggest changes in line with the theoretical research found in my literature review.

3.3 How Data will be Gathered

To accomplish my research, I need to first explore the rules and regulations governing Czech primary and secondary schools, including: what subjects are taught, how much time is spent learning them, and who keeps the system in check. For this I will discuss and analyse the *Framework Education Programme for Elementary Education* (FEP), the primary document detailing the policies of national education for those grade levels, and the Czech School Inspectorate, the body that polices the enforcement of rules proclaimed by the FEP.

After analysing the main policies of national primary and secondary education, I will examine teacher education to gain a fuller picture of how policy and practice fit together. The focus here will be on two elements: (1) teacher education reforms and (2) teaching programmes. For the former I will discuss the *White Paper on the 'National Programme for the Development of Education'* in depth and for the latter I will examine all available routes into teaching via public universities.[88] I will also explore any existing media literacy courses, analysing their structure, significance, and teaching methods.

My overall analysis of teaching programmes will take data from nine universities, which have the only Faculties of Education in the Czech Republic. My data will also account for additional faculties within those universities that offer primary and secondary teaching degrees, but the main focus will be on Faculties of Education.[89] I will examine documents from different departments within the

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[87] Yehezkel Dror, *Design for Policy Sciences*, New York: Elsevier Publishing, 1971, p. 84.

[88] Private universities are not analyzed because they do not have any relevance to national policy or perspective policies on media education in public primary and secondary schools.

[89] Faculties that offer teaching degrees outside Faculties of Education are generally for upper-secondary subjects only and do not encompass primary learning. Thus, this

faculties, consisting of: curriculum policies, course options and availability, and the existence of centres for teaching practice, as well as the amount of time devoted to practice.

In addition to documents from universities, I will also conduct interviews with Pedagogical staff. The four staff chosen for interviews were part of a convenience sample, thus the data does not purport to be representative of all public universities offering teaching degrees in the Czech Republic. The staff are convenient interviewees because they responded to my requests for interviews and are willing to share their thoughts and time with me. All of the interviewees are in different locations in the Czech Republic, therefore the interview will consist of structured, open-ended questions sent online, however, the interviewees will be given the opportunity to add their own opinions and to expand on typed answers. Additionally, because the interview questions focus on university and curriculum reform and directly question the validity of not only university, but also national policy, interviewees will remain anonymous. I will, however, disclose which university each interviewee is from and their respective department.

The use of existing policies, documents, and structured interviews will provide the opportunity to compare and contrast data regarding policy and practice. This introduces a form of triangulation, which 'maps out, or explains more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint.'[90] Interviews will allow me to highlight the most important information found in national policies, university documents, and also sources from the literature review.

3.4 How Data will be Analysed

My research will use 'conceptual frames' to analyse educational policies. Lisa Patel Stevens defines framing as the antithesis to traditional policy analysis. In this sense, frames 'are similar to the metaphor of picture frames—they work to draw attention to what is inside the frame and purposefully leave out other items. In the arena of policy, media texts, and societal issues, frames are used as strategies to

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has not been included as a main source of data collection, and where it has, it has not been taken from universities outside those that also have Faculties of Education.
[90] Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, *Research*, p. 106.

connect with and persuade audiences.[91] While I will not be attempting to persuade results in any particular direction, I will be highlighting only information that pertains to teaching methods and media literacy within the Czech education system. All other successes and failures of the system will not be discussed because they are not relevant to my research aims.

Using teaching methods and media literacy as a frame, I will examine relevant policies and documents. Figure 3.2 illustrates the overall course of this analysis, including the relevance of interviews. To guide my analysis, the following questions will be applied to each of the documents and policies I will investigate:

- What does the text want to achieve, and is this a reasonable aim?
- Are any of the other texts an antecedent to the text in question, and how does this affect its aim(s)?
- If the text discusses teaching methods is it successful, why or why not?

Interviews will also be conducted and the results will be organized by three themes: (1) knowledge about media literacy amongst Faculty of Education staff, (2) existence of media literacy courses in Faculties of Education, and (3) views on teaching programme reform. Again, Figure 3.2 summarizes the relationships between all interviews, documents, and policies.

Ultimately, the structure of the analysis will lead to some conclusions about the successes and/or failure of current teaching programmes. It will then synthesize these conclusions with information about policies at the primary and secondary level. Do policies on media education at the primary and secondary level add up with policies and views on media education for teachers?

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[91] Stevens, 'Analysis', p. 71.

Figure 3.4 Relationship between Data to be Collected and Analysed
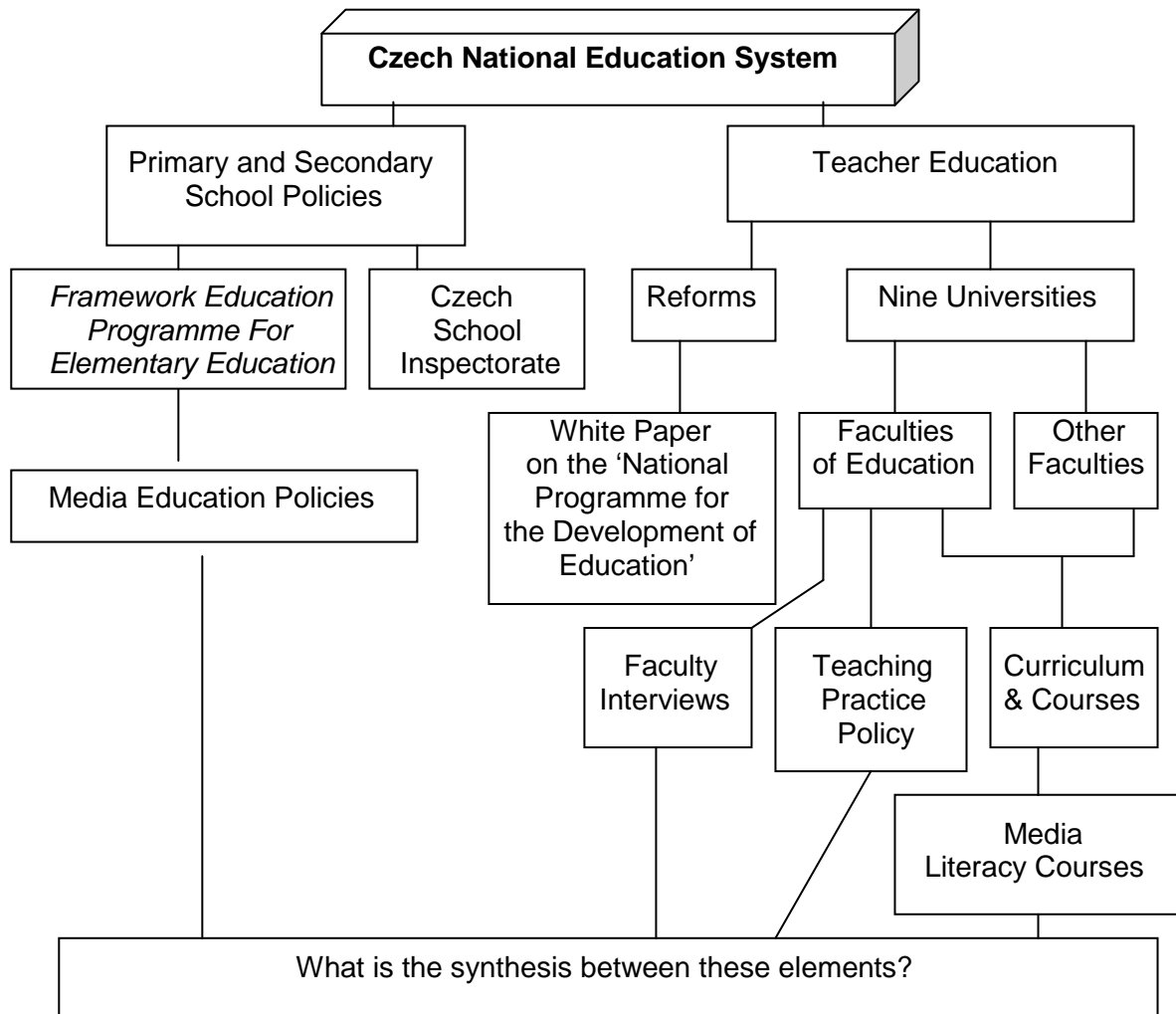
3.5 Limitations and Potential Problems

My research will not be without certain limitations. First, the data will mostly rely on policies and documents for analysis. This inevitably leads to questions regarding the appropriateness of this approach. But would another method of data collection have been better?

I had originally thought to conduct my research solely with interviews, but access to too few interview participants was a deterrent. Upon greater reflection, relying only on interviews would have been a mistake because analysis of the documents and policies that make up wider national and university policy are an indispensable part of my study. Thus, I will use both methods and compare the results to form a better conclusion about primary and secondary teaching.

Interviews have many criticisms, mainly that they are open to bias because they rely on the personal opinions of interview subjects. To reduce bias I will ask Pedagogical faculty members from different universities and different departments for interviews.[92] I am not using a case study with respondents from only one university; instead I will take interview data from almost half of the Pedagogical Faculties in the Czech Republic (owing to the number of respondents who consented to interviews). I will also reduce bias results by comparing and contrasting the interviews to documents and policies from all universities that have Pedagogical Faculties. This combination of data will lessen bias, though, not eliminate it completely. My interviews, however unbiased, will still be based on the views of university staff, and even my views may swing the objectivity of analysis unintentionally. Ultimately, no research can claim perfection because even 'researchers are fallible. They make mistakes and get things wrong. There is no paradigm solution to the elimination of error and bias'.[93]

This section on 'Limitations and Potential Problems' and all other sections in this chapter have highlighted the aims of my overall research. I have also addressed the main strategy that this research will take and the methods that will go into it. The next chapter will discuss, analyse, and synthesize the different areas of education I am exploring and present my findings.

4. Findings of Documents, Policies, and Interviews

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the results of data collected about the Czech school system at the primary, secondary, and tertiary level. The research on primary and secondary schools is conducted through detailed description and analysis of policy

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[92] Universities in the Czech Republic have multiple faculties, which also have multiple departments within them, for example, the Department of Science in the Pedagogical Faculty at Charles University.
[93] Nigel Norris, 'Error, Bias and Validity in Qualitative Research' in *Educational Action* Research, 55:1, 1997, pp. 172–176 (p. 173).

documents, specifically those pertaining to media education. To evaluate university teaching programmes, policy analysis is also applied to curricular documents. Additionally, interviews with university professors are added to gain information about the availability of media literacy courses in university teaching programmes and the effectiveness of the teaching methods currently used. The research on primary and secondary schools concentrates on policy that pertains to all basic education schools in the Czech Republic, while data about university teaching programmes focus on the nine Pedagogical Faculties in the Czech Republic, with some reference to other faculties' teaching programmes.

This research is structured so that the reader can easily understand it. First, primary and secondary education is discussed in conjunction with analysis of three elements: (1) the main policy document on elementary education, (2) the organization responsible for ensuring policies are put into practice, and (3) existing national media literacy policy for schools. Following this, teacher education will be explored by giving an overview of the current system and an analysis of proposed reforms, as well as analysis of methods and courses in teaching programmes at universities with Faculties of Education. The documents and policies discussed will all be evaluated with a social constructivist way of thinking and with the following questions (from subsection 3.4) in mind:

- What does the text want to achieve, and is this a reasonable aim?
- Are any of the other texts an antecedent to the text in question, and how does this affect its aim(s)?
- If the text discusses teaching methods is it successful, why or why not?

Additionally, documents and policies will be analysed against information discovered in the literature review in order to synthesize both sources of research.

Interview analysis will also be conducted and measured against research done on policies and documents, as well as the literature. The transcripts of interviews with university staff can be found in Appendix A. Finally, the interviews and all other research will then be summarized, explaining the relationships between each method of research.

4.2 Discussion and Analysis of Primary and Secondary Education

4.2.1 *Framework Education Programme for Elementary Education*

The Czech school system is divided into six divisions, from pre-primary to tertiary schooling. 'Basic' schooling for ages 6 to 15 makes up the primary and lower-secondary levels. This is the only stage of education in the Czech Republic that is mandatory.[94] Without acceptable and cohesive educational policies during this stage, students will not advance into upper-secondary and tertiary education at the same level, and they may fall behind their peers in other European countries, as well as globally.

Current basic education policy in the Czech Republic is documented in the 2007 amended version of the *Framework Education Programme for Elementary Education* (FEP), published by the Czech Republic's Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports. The policy guidelines put forth by the FEP propose an idealized standard of teaching that fails to highlight possible faults. For example, in UNESCO's 2008 National Report on the Development of Education, two clear problems appear in the Czech Republic's basic educational policies: (1) equal access for minorities and the Roma population and (2) equal opportunities for students of differing social statuses.[95] These problems, however, do not present themselves in the FEP. If effective, the FEP would produce a superior framework for educating primary level students, but this is not the case. The FEP, as well as other policies on basic education in the Czech Republic fail to carry out their intended goals. The result is that the FEP and other policies are vague and inefficient.

The FEP organizes basic education into nine subject areas and additionally focuses on subjects that can be taught across areas, or those that are 'cross-curricular', including the following six subjects: (1) Personal and Social Education, (2) Democratic Citizenship, (3) Thinking within European and Global Contexts, (4) Multicultural Education, (5) Environmental Education, and (6) Media Education. But though the document outlines what will be taught and how schools can form their own individualized framework (in line with the national one), it offers little insight into how students and teachers or schools will be held accountable to the proposed

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[94] VÚP, *Framework*.

[95] UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2007 <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/archive/Countries/WDE/2006/> [accessed 13 May 2009].

guidelines. In other words, there is much room for schools to create their own framework, which only loosely follows national guidelines. Effectively, the FEP proposes many ideas regarding the subjects that should be taught and the knowledge students should acquire during elementary level education, but does not state how each subject will be taught. Additionally, there is much room for individual interpretation of, for example, what textbooks will be used and what a standard class lesson should encompass. The FEP does, however, state that 'as part of its inspection activities, the Czech Schools Inspectorate ascertains and assesses the manner in which the SEP (School Educational Programme) is met and the extent to which it follows legal regulations and the FEP BE'.[96] Thus it is also significant to research how the Czech Schools Inspectorate functions and how it supposedly safeguards the policy set forth in the FEP is followed.

4.2.2 The Czech School Inspectorate

The Czech Schools Inspectorate was the first organization created for inspecting schools in Eastern Europe after the fall of communism in 1989. Today, it is charged with eight main areas of inspection for all Czech schools: 1) equal opportunities in education, 2) management of schools and school facilities, 3) assumptions for the proper functioning of schools, 4) the organization and outcomes of the course of education, 5) partnership and cooperation, 6) achievement of key competencies in subjects, 7) outcomes in the transition to higher level education, and 8) the overall evaluation of a given school.[97]

Since the 2005/2006 school year, schools have been compulsorily inspected at least once every three years. This inspection involves anywhere from 2 to 10 persons who visit a school for 2 to 5 days. Their evaluation is formulated by qualitative and quantitative data; including interviews, questionnaires, and expense report calculations. Based on these figures, the Inspectorate then classifies schools on a level between 1 and 3. If a school scores at level 1 (below average), then it is given a specified amount of time to comply with the standards required for average and

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[96] VÚP, *Framework*, p. 125.

[97] Czech School Inspectorate, 2009
<http://www.csicr.cz/upload/The%20Czech%20School%20Inspectorate.pdf>
[accessed 4, January 2010], (hereafter, Czech School Inspectorate).

above-average schools. If it fails to comply after that given time, it can then be fined up to 50,000 CZK.[98]

While the FEP sets forth a well-intentioned structure for basic education requirements, it relies entirely on the Czech Schools Inspectorate for enforcement. Here, it is important to acknowledge problems in the Inspectorate's methods. The Czech School Inspectorate does not state what the standard evaluation is for calculating a level 1, below average, school. In other words, are the standards for achieving an average or above-average score of 2 or 3 set too low for Czech children to excel, especially when measured against other Europeans? Moreover, the documents of the Inspectorate do not specify how schools should comply with the requirements set forth. How should they, for instance, find and hire teachers, and how should these teachers be held accountable to teaching the required subjects proposed by the FEP? Furthermore, is a fine that roughly equates to 700 GBP the only recompense for below-average schools? Is this enough to be sure schools fulfil the long list of the FEP requirements? There is little evidence that the Czech School Inspectorate has a widely acknowledged policy on taking care of schools with poor performance levels or those that do not follow national guidelines.

4.2.3 Policies on Media Literacy within the *Framework Education Programme for Elementary Education*

According to the *Framework Educational Programme for Elementary Education* (FEP), 'Media Education' is one of six cross-curricular subjects[99] taught in the Czech Republic.[100] All cross-curricular subjects include elements, which emphasize their importance in the curriculum, as well as their benefits for students' 'personal development'.[101] Additionally, cross-curricular subjects are required and must be implemented at some point during basic education.[102] When and how schools fulfil this requirement, however, are up to the schools themselves and their individual

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[98] Czech School Inspectorate.

[99] Cross-curricular is defined by the FEP as a subject, which is relative to current issues, and is a significant and necessary element in Czech primary education.

[100] VÚP, *Framework*.

[101] VÚP, *Framework*, p. 94.

[102] Basic education comprises both primary and lower-secondary schooling for students age 6-15.

School Education Programmes (SEP). In other words, they do not have to implement all aspects of cross-curricular subjects, only what they feel is necessary.[103]

The recommended guidelines for teaching each of the six cross-curricular subjects are outlined in bold categories or 'themes'. These cover multiple educational areas, thus allowing cross-curricular subjects to be integrated across the normal curriculum. But because schools are not obligated to administer every theme, many substantial features of cross-curricular subjects are not taught. Within 'Media Education', for example, themes include: 'critical reading and perception of media messages', 'interpretation of the relationship between media messages and reality', 'the structure of media messages', 'perception of the author of media messages', 'functioning and influence of the media in society', 'creation of the media message', and 'working on a production team'.[104] Though these themes recognize the diverse potential of media literacy, there is no guarantee that all will be taught. In truth, only one theme of 'Media Education' may be taught during a single year of primary education. If this occurs, then 'Media Education' is not cross-curricular, it is simply a small component of another taught subject.

It can thus be argued that media literacy is not fully integrated into the Czech school curriculum. Though the FEP outlines standards for cross-curricular subjects in primary and secondary schools, it does not set strict requirements. Schools can therefore choose how much or how little they wish to focus on media literacy according to which themes of 'Media Education' they put into practice across other subjects.

Additionally, there is no guarantee that media literacy will be a large part of instruction because it is not taught to the very people responsible for putting it into action. Thus, the larger problem is not how many themes of 'Media Education' are taught, but who is teaching them. How exactly are teachers being educated about media literacy in the Czech Republic?

4.3 Overview of Teacher Education

Teacher education refers to the taught courses, practical training, and all other requirements leading up to certification as a 'teacher'. In the Czech Republic this

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[103] However, both six-year and eight-year primary schools must include the entire cross-curricular subject of 'Democratic Citizenship'; this is the one exception.
[104] VÚP, *Framework*, p. 108.

means many different things for students of Pedagogical Faculties, and it is also dependent on the type of teacher one studies to become.

There are three main stages of general education before education at the tertiary or university level: 1) pre-school or nursery, 2) primary, and 3) secondary. Teachers in all, but the nursery level, are required to hold a master's degree from a university Pedagogical Faculty.[105] There is some debate about whether to reform this policy, thereby requiring all teachers to hold an advanced degree.[106] This presumes, however, that prospective pre-school teachers will willingly enrol in five years of university education when their projected starting salary is only 171,360 CZK, just over 6,000 GBP per year.[107] Teacher education and salary levels are not autonomous, thus changes to one must consider the other. Currently, pre-school teachers are required to complete an accredited higher education level course or bachelor's degree programme in pedagogical sciences.[108] Further tertiary schooling, beyond this, cannot be part of the reform agenda until salary levels are also changed.

In primary education there are two phases, which are divided between grade levels one to five and six to nine. Teachers of both phases must have completed an accredited master's study programme in pedagogical sciences, and those who are qualified to teach the second phase must also have completed additional courses related to the subjects taught in that stage.[109] Similarly, the requirements for teaching the third main stage, secondary education, are also to have completed a master's study programme and courses that relate to the subject matter taught in Czech secondary schools.

ACT No. 563 also known as 'the Act on Pedagogical Staff' lays out the requirements for teaching qualifications in all three stages, as well as the prerequisites

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[105] EACEA- The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, 2009, 'Organisation of the Education System in the Czech Republic', <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/eurybase/eurybase_full_rep orts/CZ_EN.pdf> [accessed 6 January 2010], (hereafter, EACEA, 'Organization of Education').

[106] Grecmanová,, Holoušová,, and Urbanovská, 'Teacher Education in the Czech Republic' in *Metodika*. 3, (2), 2002, pp. 51-75 (p. 65), (hereafter, Grecmanová, Holoušová, and Urbanovská, *Metodika*).

[107] EACEA, 'Organization of Education'.

[108] ACT No. 563 in *Coll., on Pedagogical Staff and the Amendment to Some Other Acts*, 2004, <http://www.msmt.cz/dokumenty/act-no-563-of-24th-september-2004 > [accessed 7 January 2010], (hereafter, Act No. 563).

[109] ACT No. 563.

for coaches, psychologists, and teachers of: special education, vocational training, languages, and religion. The act does not, however, give any specifics about the 'accredited master's study programme' future pedagogical staff must pursue. Of the nine universities offering master's programmes in the field, there are thus many differences in what is taught to prospective teachers.

4.4 Discussion and Analysis of Educational Reforms

With many different teaching programmes and no overarching norm, who's to say what will be most successful in educating Czech teachers? This also begs questions about why educational reforms are necessary in the Czech Republic. The OECD's '2009 Factbook on Economic, Environmental, and Social Statistics' gives some answers to these questions. Looking at the rates of tertiary graduation compared to overall population at graduation age, the OECD average is 37 percent, while the Czech Republic garners only 29 percent. Australia, Iceland, and New Zealand have the highest levels of tertiary education graduates at a range of 52-63 percent. From this information it can be argued that some outside factor is causing better graduation rates in Australia as compared to the Czech Republic, and finding these factors is part and parcel to reform. The Czech Republic is trying to improve its graduation numbers and its global competitiveness. In order to do this, changes must be made at all levels of education, including teacher education.

But simply stating that those countries whose tertiary graduation rates are highest should serve as examples of best practice is inadequate. In the area of teacher education, what is taught in one country does not transfer directly to another. So though we may know why reform is necessary, the question still lingers regarding: 'what will be most successful in educating Czech teachers?' Current practice in pedagogical faculties does not follow a national standard and the parameters of the curriculum are very loosely drawn by national documents.

The Czech Republic is currently undergoing educational reforms, which have been laid out in documents, such as the 2004 Act on Pedagogical Workers, The White Paper on the 'National Programme for the Development of Education', and the more recent 'White Paper on Tertiary Education'. The main focuses of the proposed reforms are: education financing for schools and teacher salaries, curriculum changes, and revisions to teacher education.

The following section focuses on the proposed reforms to teacher education. Here it will be important to analyse the suggestions for change in official documents and also to decipher what is lacking. Is teacher education on the path to good reform, and if not, what can be added to implement more efficient teaching and better results in the classroom?

4.4.1 The White Paper on the 'National Programme for the Development of Education'

Most analyses have come to similar conclusions regarding the vague and 'abstract' nature of Czech educational reform documents.[110] This brings to light the difficulties in conceptualizing positive results. In the area of teacher education, for instance, most suggestions for reform are unclear and allow little understanding of how changes will be implemented and what outcome is desired.

The most significant of these proposed reforms is introduced by The White Paper on the 'National Programme for the Development of Education', which is published by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport. The White paper prescribes 'a standard for teacher qualifications to be used as criterion for the accreditation of study programmes and fields designed by faculties, while still fully respecting the autonomy of higher education institutions'.[111] Currently there is no national standard for pedagogical degree programmes, so how can one be defined?

The White Paper discusses a 'binding framework' that would define 'key-components of qualifications' for teaching programmes, but it does not detail what this entails.[112] While it does state that subject specific training will be necessary at a level of 10-12 percent of total training time, no attempt is made to define these subjects. How can a national standard be imposed without concrete descriptions of the changes that will take place? Even with better goals for teacher education programmes there is no guarantee that they will be successful.

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[110] OECD Education Policy Committee, 'Expert Response to Czech Republic Ministry of Education January 2009 White Paper on Tertiary Education', 2009.

[111] Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport, 'National Programme on the Development of Education: White Paper' in Institute for Information on Education, Prague, 2001, p. 46, <http://www.msmt.cz/dokumenty/bila-kniha-narodni-program-rozvoje-vzdelavani-v-ceske-republice-formuje-vladni-strategii-v-oblasti-vzdelavani-strategie-odrazi-celospolecenske-zajmy-a-dava-konkretni-podnety-k-praci-skol2001> [accessed 20 February 2009], (hereafter, MEYS, White Paper, 2001).

[112] MEYS, White Paper, 2001, p. 46.

The White Paper does not highlight all of the issues currently faced by teaching programmes. Aside from the courses Czechs take to become teachers, there are other difficulties present. For example, in a 2002 study by the Faculty of Education at Palacky University in Olomouc, teachers are sited as frequently complaining about faculties that do not prepare students to be teachers, but instead prepare scientists with no practical experience.[113] Future teachers not only need improved courses, but also more on the job training in the teaching field. To solve these and other problems in pedagogical education it is necessary to analyse current teacher training in the Czech Republic.

4.4.2 What are the Most Beneficial Reforms that can be Accomplished ?

Teacher education is in the process of reform, however, what will work best has yet to be determined. There are many conflicting ideas about what will help the Czech Republic achieve its goals of becoming a better global competitor with more students graduating from tertiary education.

According to the 2009 'White Paper on Tertiary Education', the 'responsibility for selecting and training future teachers rests fully with faculties of education. These faculties should increasingly focus on identifying the problems that teachers face in practice, and on innovative study programmes that eliminate these setbacks'.[114] Here there is no argument for a national standard, instead responsibility is levelled at individual universities. Additionally the aim is to find 'innovative' ways to teach, thus enabling future teachers to be more successful in the classroom.

The following sections will concentrate on how more innovative teaching methods along with more classroom practice are some of the most beneficial reforms pedagogical faculties can tangibly achieve. Ultimately, if teachers are taught to motivate their students with new teaching methods, then those students will be more likely to aspire toward tertiary learning. So now the question is: 'what methods are most efficient for classroom learning and how can new teaching practice programmes be implemented in Pedagogical Faculties?'

4.5 Discussion and Analysis of Primary and Secondary Teaching Programmes

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[113] Grecmanová, Holoušová, and Urbanovská, *Metodika*.
[114] MEYS, 'White Paper', 2009.

Prospective teachers in the Czech Republic can obtain primary and secondary teaching degrees in one of two ways: (1) through a master's study programme at one of the nine existing Faculties of Education, or (2) through an accredited master's degree programme in another faculty, which offers a teaching qualification. The latter often offers secondary teaching degrees in specialized subjects, for example: biology teaching or English language teaching.[115] Full-time primary school teachers who do not specialize in the teaching of only one or two subjects can obtain a teaching degree through one of the nine Faculties of Education.

At each of the nine universities[116] offering teaching degrees through Faculties of Education, students are able to choose an overall concentration from different departments within their faculty. Unfortunately, because there is no national standard for teaching programmes, the departments and the courses they offer differ greatly from one university to the next. Some universities have developed a broader field of expertise and include faculties and departments that emphasize skills for future teachers of technology, art, and many other specialized subjects, but no university has established a programme that is necessarily better than any other.

All of the faculties offering teaching degrees lack courses that emphasize teaching practice,[117] and they do not teach in a way that shows future teachers how to engage their students in learning. Thus, the biggest problems in current teacher education programmes are that they do not emphasize the real world situations, which will take place in the classroom or prepare teachers to connect with their students. Current teaching programmes do not show future teachers how to develop creative teaching methods or utilize current possibilities for classroom engagement.

4.5.1 Required and Optional Courses in Faculties of Education

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[115] 'Katedra Biologie a Ecologie Přírodovědecká Fakulta Ostravská Univerzita v Ostravě', <http://prf.osu.cz/kbe/> [accessed 6 February 2010].
'Jihočeská Univerzita v Českých Budějovicích Přírodovědecká Fakulta', <http://www.prf.jcu.cz/cz/balicky-uchazeci/magisterske-studijni-programy/> [accessed 17 February 2010].
[116] The nine universities, which currently have Faculties of Education are: The University of Ostrava, Charles University, The University of South Bohemia, Masaryk University, The University of Hradec Králové, The University of West Bohemia, The University of J. E. Purkyně, The Technical University of Liberec, and Palacký University.
[117] The actual time spent in primary and secondary classrooms preparing students of teaching programmes for the real conditions of the classroom.

Within most of the nine Faculties of Education in the Czech Republic there is a Department of Primary Education. At Charles University, for example, Primary Education is differentiated from the Departments of Music Education and IT and Technical Education.[118] Within the Primary Education Department at Charles, there are also 'study areas', which makeup the overall focuses: preschool pedagogy and primary pedagogy. Students must earn professional competency in a specialized area of education (music, art, drama, or physical education) or in a foreign language (English, German, or French), but there is little emphasis on subjects taught in other departments, such as: IT and Technical Education.[119] Departments do not normally intersect with each other, and thus do not prepare future teachers beyond giving them knowledge of the subjects they will teach in primary schools. Essentially, they are being lectured in subjects like Czech History and basic science, so that they in turn can go forward and lecture others.

The problem at Charles University and at other universities is not in what they are teaching, but in how they are teaching. For example, in the Institute of Primary Education at the University of Hradec Králové, the only required courses that focus on instruction in teaching methods are the didactics of: science, math, reading, and writing. In addition to these required courses, there are also some electives in 'Comparative Pedagogy' and 'Social Psychology', which offer insight into how to teach. But these courses are optional and are only taught during one semester of the second year of bachelor's level study. This essentially means they are taken once in five years or not at all by any given student.

In addition to courses in teaching methods, there are also options to enrol in elective courses at Hradec Králové, including: English or Russian Languages, Physical Education, Music, Art, and Special Education.[120] These courses, however, focus predominantly on the basic subjects primary level students must learn in their own schooling. Due to the structure of both elective and required courses, there is

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[118] 'Charles University Faculty of Education',
<http://www.pedf.cuni.cz/index.php?menu=17> [accessed 5 February 2010].
[119] 'Katedra Primární Pedagogiky Pedagogické Fakulty UK v Praze',
<http://userweb.pedf.cuni.cz/primped/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=19&Itemid=33> [accessed 17 February 2010].
[120] 'Ústav Primární a Preprimární Edukace Hradec Králové',
<http://lide.uhk.cz/pdf/ucitel/ valteja1/rozvrhy/LS/> [accessed 6 February 2010].

little focus on how to teach, meaning there are very few required courses whose goal it is to orient prospective teachers with the classroom environment.

4.5.2 Obtaining Teaching Degrees from Other Faculties

Teaching qualifications are not solely obtained through Faculties of Education. Many universities in the Czech Republic offer teaching degrees at a variety of different faculties, including: Science, Philosophy, and Art. The training in these teaching programmes often focuses on specific subjects, which are ideally suited for prospective teachers of secondary schooling. In its Department of Mathematics, for example, the Faculty of Science at the University of Ostrava offers only secondary school math teaching degrees.[121]

Other universities and faculties, however, offer degrees for primary school teachers as well.[122] For instance within the Faculty of Arts at the University of Hradec Králové, students at the Institute of Philosophy and Social Science can obtain master's degrees in teaching primary or secondary school 'Civics'. In this particular programme, students begin their bachelor's studies in the Faculty of Arts and finish their master's degree in the Faculty of Education. Thus, at Hradec Králové some faculties intersect to form 'joint educational study programmes' with the Faculty of Education.[123]

Still, other programmes provide combined course offerings. At the University of South Bohemia, which offers physics, biology, and mathematics degrees for secondary school teachers in its Faculty of Science, courses such as: physical education from the Faculty of Education or English from the Faculty of Arts can be taken alongside science courses.[124] Course options such as these afford more choice for students of specialized teaching subjects; however, they do not ensure aspiring teachers are learning all the skills they need to command a classroom.

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[121] 'Katedra Matematiky Přírodovědecká Fakulta Ostravská Univerzita v Ostravě, <http://prf.osu.cz/kma/index.php?kategorie=35680&id=525> [accessed 16 February 2010].

[122] These degrees are appropriate for the second stage of primary schooling or ages 11 to 15.

[123] 'Katedra Filozofie a Společenských Věd Filozofické Fakulty UHK, <http://kfsv.ff.uhk.cz/cs/on> [accessed 17 February 2010].

[124] 'Jihočeská Univerzita v Českých Budějovicích Přírodovědecká Fakulta', <http://www.prf.jcu.cz/cz/balicky-uchazeci/magisterske-studijni-programy/> [accessed 17 February 2010].

Whether teachers obtain degrees from Faculties of Education or alternative options, the most vital skill they can learn is how to teach effectively. With the exception of the University of Ostrava's Faculty of Science,[125] all of the faculties discussed here offer very few courses in teaching methods and even less are available in teaching practice. And while some programmes offer course options that intersect across faculties, no requirement exists regarding the amount of methods courses students should take from those. In Faculties of Education there are generally more methods and teaching practice courses available, however these differ greatly from one university to the next and are not necessarily best practice either.

4.5.3 Teaching Practice and Focus on Methods Training in Faculties of Education

In all of the nine Pedagogical Faculties, courses in teaching practice are available, however the degree to which they are offered varies, and none of the universities relies more heavily on practice than they do on other required subject matter. Four of the Pedagogical Faculties have Centres for Teaching Practice,[126] which dictate the number of hours students must practice in a classroom setting before becoming certified teachers. At the University of West Bohemia, the Centre for Teaching Practice (SPP) arranges for students to practice in: kindergartens, the first and second level of primary school, and secondary schools. These practices take place for one week during the third year of a bachelor's degree, three weeks during the first year of a master's degree, and four continuous weeks during the final year of the master's degree.[127] Overall, teaching practice at the University of West Bohemia amounts to eight weeks over the course of five years. At other universities teaching

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[125] There are, on average, five courses in methods and teaching practice available in each of the University of Ostrava's Physics, Biology, and Chemistry Departments within the Faculty of Science, 'Předměty na Katedře Fyziky Přírodovědecká Fakulta Ostravská Univerzita v Ostravě', 'Předměty na Katedře Biologie a Ekologie Přírodovědecká Fakulta Ostravská Univerzita v Ostravě', <http://prf.osu.cz/kfy/index.php?kategorie=494&id=550> <http://prf.osu.cz/index.php?kategorie=530&id=578> [accessed 17 February 2010].
[126] Centres for teaching practice in Faculties of Education can be found at: The University of Ostrava, The University of West Bohemia, The University of J. E. Purkyně, and The Technical University of Liberec.
[127] 'Západočeské Univerzity v Plzni, Středisko Pedagogické Praxe', <http://www.zcu.cz/fpe/spp/ pokyny.html> [accessed 7 March 2010].

practice is even less of the total required class time.[128] The amount of time that should be devoted specifically to teaching practice is debatable, however, all subject matter should include more emphasis on methods, rather than focusing strictly on content.

4.6 Discussion and Analysis of Media Literacy Courses in Teaching Programmes

Currently, there are very few courses for teachers that deal directly with media literacy. Moreover, no Pedagogical Faculties or other faculties offering teaching degrees require courses in media literacy and education. If courses are offered at all they are optional. At the University of Ostrava, for instance, elective courses are offered in 'Media and Communications' and 'Multimedia'.[129] Both courses focus specifically on teaching media literacy, the latter on creation and the former on analysis. Similarly at Charles University, courses offered include: 'Education about Media and its Utilization', 'Media Education and Teaching it on Basic and Secondary Schools', and 'Media Education- Introduction to Interpreting Mass Media'.[130] Though these courses directly address what media literacy is and how to teach it in the classroom, they are not required. Future teachers are not obligated to learn about media literacy, and therefore do not always know how to teach it in primary and secondary classrooms.

Many teaching programmes offer courses in subjects that are similar to media literacy, but do not teach analysis of media or new teaching methods. These are most often technology and computer courses. At The University of Ostrava, for example, courses include: 'Computers in Teaching and Learning', 'E-Learning Technology', and 'Educational Technology Applications'.[131] While these do involve media, the focus is mainly on access and use, leaving out other essential characteristics of media

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[128] 'Centrum Praktické Přípravy, Fakulta Přírodovědně-humanitní a Pedagogická, TU Liberec', <http://cpp.wpr.cz/> [accessed 7 Marchyh 2010].

[129] Pedagogická Fakulta Ostravská Univerzita v Ostravě Předměty na Katedře Informačních a Komunikačních Technologií, <http://pdf.osu.cz/kik/index.php?kategorie=379&id=592> [accessed 5 April 2010], (hereafter, Ostravská Katedře Informačních).

[130] Charles University Subjects 2009-2010 Academic Year, <https://is.cuni.cz/eng/studium/predmety/index.php?do=search&nazev=media+education&kod=&match=substring&srch_nazev=0&srch_nazev=1&fak=&ustav=&trida=&klas=&ucit=&pvyjazyk=&sem=&pocet=20&b=Search>. [accessed 5 April 2010], (hereafter, UK, 'University Subjects').

[131] Ostravská Katedře Informačních.

literacy. Most importantly, analysis of the medium itself is imperative to media literacy.

Ultimately, the lack of courses in media literacy for future teachers and the priority technology and computer literacy take in teaching programmes and primary and secondary schools, hinder teacher's knowledge of the subject. As with any discipline, 'teachers cannot teach what they have not learned and learned to value themselves'.[132] So while media literacy would be beneficial in Czech primary and secondary schools, it cannot be properly implemented without media literate teachers. Thus until teachers are educated about what media literacy is and how it should be taught to children, schools wont emphasize its cross-curricular potential, teaching methods wont change, and media education wont be fully realized.

4.7 Interviews with Pedagogical Staff

To build on the research and results found in documents and policies, I conducted four interviews with Pedagogical staff. The interview questions focused on three main areas: (1) knowledge about media literacy amongst Faculty of Education staff, (2) existence of media literacy courses in Faculties of Education, and (3) views on teaching programme reform. The respondents are professors in four different Faculties of Education in the Czech Republic, and were originally contacted by email in Czech and English. All agreed to answer interview questions by email in English.

4.7.1 Knowledge About Media Literacy

Question 1A- The first question asked staff members: 'What do you know about media literacy, if anything?'

Response 1A: Three staff members answered that they have some idea about what media literacy is, however, one staff member did not know, stating: 'I believe it is understanding computers and things similar, but I do not know really'. Those who did have some knowledge of media literacy all had a very similar understanding, which included: understanding the importance and benefits of different types of media for those who use them, as well as the drawbacks and that it is a relatively new concept, which has only recently become popular to study in the Czech Republic.

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[132] Brown, Goetze, and Schwartz, 'Teachers', p. 161.

Question 1B- The next question asked staff members: 'In your opinion does media literacy mean understanding how computers and digital technologies work? Please explain why or why not.'

Response 1B: All of the staff had varied answers for this question. One, for example, wrote that 'it depends on how it is viewed', while another thought it was only about computers and technology. Two of the respondents stated their belief that media literacy means more than simply understanding computers; it also 'means understanding how a computer works and what it does for who is using a computer'. The varied responses show how different conceptions are of media literacy in the Czech Republic, even amongst professors in Faculties of Education.

Question 1C- The third question about media literacy knowledge asked staff members: 'If you were told media literacy is:

1) Access to media (television, computers, advertisements, news stories, and all other devices, which export messages)

2) Knowledge about how to create one's own media

3) The ability to analyse how media affects the user and decipher the benefits of it

Do you think it is an important subject for children to learn in school? Please explain why or why not.'

Response 1C: The professors answered a unanimous 'yes' to this question, though they each cited different reasoning. One professor supported his answer by arguing that media literacy is 'fundamental', but it is not being used correctly at present, thus 'it is sometime computers, but no talking about what a computer does'. Another faculty member cited media literacy's importance, but also noted that in the Czech Republic it is difficult, and 'sometimes it cannot happen because teachers don't know media literacy'. So while all faculty members agree media literacy is an important subject in schools, they also admit there are problems integrating it into the curriculum at the primary and secondary level.

Question 1D- The final question concerning knowledge of media literacy asked staff: 'Are you aware that media education is one of the cross-curricular subjects that should be taught in primary and secondary schools?'

Response 1D: All, except one faculty member, are aware that media education is a cross-curricular subject that should be taught in Czech schools. One faculty member even stated that though it is taught, it is not done so correctly.

4.7.2 Media Literacy Courses

Question 2A- The first question asked staff: 'Are you aware of any media literacy courses that are offered at your university? What are these?'

Response 2A: The answers here were very mixed. One member of staff did not know of any courses, while two said they know of technology and computer related ones or those that speak about it indirectly. Another staff member listed two courses that are currently offered at his university, which deal directly with media literacy. The variation in answers shows how different teaching programmes can be throughout the Czech Republic.

Question 2B- The second question about media literacy courses asked staff: 'Are there any courses, which focus on digital literacy (digital media or technology courses)?'

Response 2B: All Pedagogical Faculty members answered that they know about many courses, which focus on computers and technology. This differs from the previous questions, which asked specifically about media literacy and not other literacies. It can be concluded that universities have many classes, which have concentrations in literacies that are often mistaken for media education courses, but only focus on digital competencies.

4.7.3 Teaching Programme Reform

Question 3A- On teaching programme reform I asked university staff: 'Do you think that teacher-training programmes at your university give enough courses that focus on teaching practice? If not, how do you feel this could be changed?'

Response 3A: Three of the respondents said they feel there is not enough teaching practice given before teachers begin working in the classroom. Two faculty members mentioned that one problem faced by universities is the provisioning of both teaching practice and practice in subjects teachers must learn to teach. Thus while more teaching practice would be good, a 'balance' must exist between practice and learning.

Question 3B- Next I asked staff: 'From what you know about media literacy, do you think more media literacy courses for future teachers would be a good thing? Please explain your answer.'

Response 3B: All faculty members said more media literacy courses for future teachers would be good. Two professors brought up significant points about why this has not yet occurred. The first stated that it has not yet been studied enough because

media literacy is still relatively new to the Czech Republic, while the other brought up the point that universities would first need qualified professionals or professors to teach media literacy to teachers. These are both valid arguments that could be addressed by universities in the future.

Questions 3C- The last question I asked the professors was: 'From what you know about media literacy, do you think more courses in the subject for future educators could then improve teaching in primary and secondary schools? Please explain your answer.'

Response 3C: All of the staff members answered a unanimous 'yes' to this question. One professor elaborated his answer, stating: 'this would improve teaching in schools because it shows teachers how to use media and how it can help teach and also does this for students in schools. It is becoming very important, and will be bigger soon'. The faculty members agreement on media literacy's ability to improve teaching in primary and secondary schools leads me to believe that many educators feel media literacy is an important subject for both students and future teachers to learn.

4.7.4 Conclusions

The four faculty members interviewed have differing opinions about what media literacy encompasses; however, all think media education (according to the definition I provided) is a vital subject for students in primary and secondary schools. Professors stated that it is difficult for media education to become part of schools' curriculum because teachers have no instruction in what media literacy is and what best practice is for teaching it. They also said that they are, for the most part, unaware of media literacy courses in their respective faculties that specifically deal with the subject of media literacy.

The professors agree that teaching practice is not offered as much as it should be, but also state that practice and the teaching of subjects must both be taught. Thus, it is difficult to find a way to teach subjects and also have practice. Media literacy, if implemented, might merge both practice and subject learning. The professors also suggest two steps for integrating media literacy into teaching programmes: (1) to study the subject more and (2) to find suitable professors that can teach the subject to future primary and secondary teachers. All staff interviewed, agree that media literacy would be a valuable tool for teaching primary and secondary children. So now the only question is: 'when will the ball begin rolling?'

4.8 Synthesis of Data on Media Literacy: The Relationship Between Policies, Reforms, and Teaching Programmes

First, my research analysed primary and secondary education, specifically the FEP, the Czech School Inspectorate, and media education policies within the FEP. I learned that though media education policies exist, they are not enforced well, and there is much room in the FEP for subjective interpretation of what media education is and how it should be implemented. Ultimately, individual schools are responsible for media education and can integrate it in any way they see fit. But who can teach media education properly even if it is integrated into the curriculum? In the literature review I discovered that teachers are the first and most important element of media education, thus there is a missing link between media education policy and the education of those who are enforcing it.

After discussing primary and secondary education, I gave an overview of teacher education in the Czech Republic and discussed and analysed reforms that are currently taking place or are potentially going to take effect, including The White Paper on the 'National Programme for the Development of Education'. My research here found that the most beneficial reforms would be those that improve teaching methods and devote more time to teaching practice. According to the literature in Chapter 2, teaching methods that are less hierarchical in nature promote discussion between and amongst students and teacher, and are more apt to also promote critical thinking and a classroom environment more conducive to learning.[133]

Examining teaching programmes in nine public universities in the Czech Republic, I found that there is very little focus on teaching practice and methods in primary and secondary school training. Future teachers are thus given little knowledge about how to run a classroom and engage their students in learning. I also wanted to know if media literacy courses were taught at these universities. In the literature review I found that media literacy facilitates classroom learning and acts as a guide to teaching. I therefore chose to explore media literacy as a teaching method, and found there are very few courses, which concentrate on the subject. The results here indicate that there are significant problems in practice and methods teaching and also that media literacy is not being taught to all teachers.

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[133] Rowgow, 'Transition' and Wesch, Lecture.

Not only could media literacy help teaching methods, as is spelled out in the literature review, but it could also help keep current media education policy on track. If we go back to the discussion on the FEP's media education policy, we can review my conclusions regarding: poor oversight of the policy, misinterpretations of what media education should be in schools, and the need for qualified teachers. With media literacy courses in teaching programmes there could be an answer to the current teaching methods problems and the FEPs policies could be better enforced.

To reinforce these findings, I also conducted interviews with professors in four Faculties of Education in the Czech Republic. The interviews were broken down into three main themes or areas of discussion about media literacy and nine questions were asked in total. The results showed that a majority of professors believe teaching practice is lacking and that media literacy courses can help teaching methods at the primary and secondary level. Their opinions, along with the findings from documents and policies show two main results: (1) teaching practice and methods courses in teacher training programmes are insufficient and (2) media literacy is a significant tool for improving methods for future teachers, helping students learn, and enforcing already existing policy on media education in primary and secondary schools.

5. Conclusions and Reflections

5.1 Introduction

The Overall aim of my research was 'to develop an understanding of media literacy and to investigate its potential benefits in Czech teacher education programmes'. More specifically, the three research aims I had in mind when I set out to accomplish this study were to:

1) Identify the possible benefits of media literacy in primary and secondary schools

2) Explore current teaching practices and education policies, determining if deficiencies exist and thus where media literacy might help

3) Make recommendations regarding teacher education programmes

This chapter will discuss the research aims listed above and the findings of the previous chapter, while also offering overall conclusions.

First, the findings presented in Chapter 4 will be summarized and conclusions will be made that are relevant to my initial research aims. The third aim was briefly discussed in the findings chapter, but will be discussed thoroughly here. Therefore, there will be a sub-section on recommendations that highlights this research aim more closely. Finally, I will reflect on the research I have done, presenting my own opinion about the highs and lows of taking on this particular study.

5.2 Summary of Main Research Aims and Outcomes

5.2.1 Aim #1: The Benefits of Media Literacy in Primary and Secondary Schools

Research on the possible benefits of media literacy was done in my second chapter. Here, the review of literature gave valuable information about what media literacy is and what it can accomplish if it is integrated into everyday classroom lessons. I began the literature review by researching traditional classroom teaching methods, followed by communications theories regarding the importance of relationships both inside and outside the classroom. What I found was that most teaching today is 'mass teaching', which involves the teacher standing at the front of the classroom, giving orders, and students consequently memorizing information the teacher expounds. But because information no longer comes strictly from the teacher, it is necessary to think about other sources, specifically those from media.

Different media mediums offer alternative sources of learning, so much so that many children often claim to learn more from the computer than from teachers.[134] My research found that this is not the best structure of learning and that with media literacy, learning can become more than just 'mass teaching' in the classroom. It can merge the media that children are inundated with outside the classroom with the lessons they have everyday in the classroom.

In the Czech Republic, media literacy is defined as access, analysis, and creation of media, as well as knowledge about the benefits of proper use to individuals and society as a whole. Thus, it does not only consist of proper computer

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[134] Livingstone, 'Children', p. 71.

or technology use, but also the ability to analyse these media sources, learning the pluses and minuses they offer. The benefits range from creating discussion and interaction in the classroom to making students more aware of where media comes from and what messages companies and other media owners are advancing.

The simplest and most effective way to integrate media literacy into the primary and secondary curriculum is to make it a cross-curricular subject, meaning the subject is not taught on its own, but is instead integrated into already existing subjects such as math and history. When this occurs it opens up the chance for media literacy to give real benefits in the classroom. These are what Michael Wesch refers to as semantic and personal significance.[135] The semantic allows students to relate subjects to the world around them, creating a broader context for subject learning than is found in traditional teaching and where memorization for tests and exams is essential. The personal, on the other hand, gives students the opportunity to think about their own lives in relation to the subjects they are learning. Both the semantic and the personal are some of the benefits of media literacy.

It can be concluded from my research and review of literature that the main benefits of media literacy are that it offers a different way of teaching, which is not hierarchical or based on 'mass teaching', but instead offers teachers a chance to create discussion and constructive critique in their classrooms. Students are thus able to think critically about media, not just as an alternative source of information or worse as entertainment, but to evaluate its uses and messages. Ultimately, media literacy offers many benefits, which are both semantic and personal and therefore affect each individual student.

5.2.2 Aim #2: Current Teaching Practices and Education Policies

To explore my second aim, policies and documents were analysed and interviews were conducted with four Pedagogical Faculty members. The findings of these research methods can be found in Chapter 4, which begins with a discussion and analysis of primary and secondary education. Examining the FEP and the Czech School Inspectorate, I found that there is little done to keep schools' curriculum in line with the national curriculum set out in the FEP. The Czech School Inspectorate charges a menial sum to schools that do not follow guidelines, and it is unclear how well schools must conform to the guidelines of the FEP. In other words, there is no set

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[135] Wesch, Lecture.

guide that tells how much room for individual decision making schools should have in creating their own curriculum.

My research also found that media education is one of six cross-curricular subjects that all primary and lower secondary schools are required to teach. Therefore, media literacy must be taught across subjects, which according to my earlier review of literature findings, is the most effective way to teach it. But how schools implement media education is up to the schools themselves.[136] For example, a school might choose to implement media literacy into one literature class at one grade level. There is no rule that states when and how media education requirements must be fulfilled.

There is also no rule on who should teach media education as a cross-curricular subject in primary and secondary schools. Thus, I also examined teacher education in the Czech Republic. I began this part of my research by discussing and analysing reforms. Most reforms, including the White Paper on the 'National Programme for the Development of Education' are vague and offer little solution to a growing number of problems in teaching and education. I found that because of this, the most beneficial reforms the Czech Republic can hope to achieve are changes to teaching methods and teaching practice.

It is difficult to change something if you do not understand how it works and what the exact problems are that need improving, thus I chose to explore teacher education programmes in the Czech Republic. From studying the curriculum of the nine Faculties of Education and other faculties that offer teaching programmes, I was able to make some conclusions about Czech teacher education. First, there are very few courses offered, at any of the Faculties of Education, which deal with methods training. Most required courses are in subjects appropriate to the grade level the teacher will be teaching, such as math and science. And where there are methods courses, they are usually optional.

The second problem I came across is that there are too few hours spent practicing before becoming a certified teacher. Some universities offer centres for teaching practice, but others do not. In my interviews, I found that the need for more teaching practice is seen as a common problem in Faculties of Education, but it is also difficult to balance the teaching of subject material and practice. Therefore, the more tangible solution would be to improve the first problem: teaching methods.

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[136] VÚP, *Framework*, p. 108.

All of the professors I interviewed think that media literacy is something that could improve teaching in primary and secondary schools, and thus there own teaching programmes. When I researched current media literacy courses at universities that give teaching qualifications and asked staff members, the results were varied. No university requires media literacy courses, and of the nine Faculties of Education, only Charles University and the University of Ostrava offer two or three optional courses, most do not offer any.[137] Adding to this, one of the professors interviewed did not know what media literacy was before our interview and did not realise media education is part of the FEP's cross-curricular subject requirements. How can media education be successful at the primary and secondary level if it is not taught at the tertiary level to the very people responsible for its potential success?

My conclusion is that the Czech education system has a circular problem. Media education policies for primary and lower-secondary schools are not effective because there is little oversight and no education for teachers in the subject. Additionally, teacher education programmes lack a firm focus in methods and practice, which skills in media literacy might actually improve. My research shows that professors believe the implementation of media education in primary and lower-secondary schools has been haphazard because of the current system at all levels of education. Thus, with more focus on media literacy at the tertiary level (in teaching programmes) more results will follow at lower levels of education. My recommendations on this will be given in the following sub-section.

5.3 Recommendations

As a result of my research, I have made three conclusions. First, media literacy offers non-hierarchical teaching, which creates a space for interaction and forces students to think critically about media, the world, and their own lives. Second, Czech media education policies are not effective because there is no instruction in the subject for teachers. And third, teacher education programmes could benefit from improving the teaching methods that future primary and secondary teachers are taught. One solution to this is to integrate media literacy courses into the curriculum because they offer a greater focus on (as the first conclusion above states in detail) better teaching methods.

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[137] Ostravská Katedře Informačních and UK 'University Subjects'.

Because public universities are the main source of teacher education in the Czech Republic, it is up to these university level teaching programmes to make media literacy a reality in classroom learning. This can be done by creating more courses that focus on media literacy in teaching programmes and requiring at least one of these courses in every primary and secondary teaching programme, regardless of teachers' specialized disciplines.[138]

To illustrate this recommendation, it is necessary to study comparative examples in other countries. Several institutions in America, Canada, and the UK have already begun programmes, which emphasize media literacy for future teachers. In the US alone, programmes currently exist at Webster University, Southern Illinois University, the University of Oregon, Harvard University, the University of Rutgers, Temple University, and Green State University.[139] Additionally, one graduate programme dedicated specifically to media literacy for educators, is in effect at Appalachian State University in North Carolina. Led by David Considine, the Master's in Educational Media is stated to:

> Place emphasis upon the impact and influence of media content on school and society, and students and citizens. Further, the program gives attention to the subject of media audiences and media ownership. Graduates of the program are prepared to foster media literacy initiatives, projects and curriculum development in a variety of educational settings.[140]

While Appalachian State's programme is innovative, it is not practical for all teachers to participate in a degree programme devoted only to media literacy. Rather, the programme itself is a model for how significant media literacy is and how much attention it deserves from universities, teachers, students, and the public.

One of the courses included in the programme at Appalachian State, titled 'Media Literacy and Curriculum Development', examines the teaching of media

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[138] Specialized disciplines are those which secondary school teachers normally have an added expertise in, for example, secondary level biology teachers.

[139] Brown, Goetze, and Schwartz, 'Teachers'.

[140] Appalachian State University, School of Education, Master's in Educational Media, 2004 <http://www.ci.appstate.edu/programs/edmedia/medilit/mlmasters.html> [accessed 15 April 2010], (hereafter, Appalachian State, MA Education Media).

literacy in other states and countries.[141] By learning about programmes elsewhere, countries gain expertise in the field that they might not have otherwise gained from only looking at their own country. A comparative course like this would be beneficial to countries, such as the Czech Republic, that do not currently possess specific media literacy programmes for educators.

Additionally, universities would need to find professors to teach media literacy subjects. This could be done by organizing qualified professors that currently have knowledge of the subject to have them teach new classes or otherwise hire new qualified professors. There are people who are educated in this field; it is only a matter of organizing them to teach and educate others.

Some critics might argue that to see changes come to light in teaching programmes would be too monetarily costly. However, there is little funding necessary for such modifications to the required curriculum. Computers and other forms of media already exist in most primary and secondary schools and many, though not all; children have computers, Internet access, and other media in their homes. Thus, access, analysis, production and understanding will not be difficult or costly. The real costs will be the effort and time officials and universities take to put media literacy into practice.

5.4 Self-Reflection

This study on media education has gone through many changes. My original research focused on media education in Czech schools from a more sociological perspective. Essentially I wanted to be a direct observer or do a case study to examine Czech primary schools' utilization of media inside the classroom. I theorized that media education would facilitate classroom engagement, thus I wanted to see if this was true. There were many problems with this original concept. First, the language barrier was a very significant issue. While I have had Czech language training, I am not proficient enough to observe classrooms full of native Czech speakers.

The other difficulty was finding a relevant measurement for the effectiveness of media education in the classroom, which if done properly, would require a much larger study and more time, thus being more suitable for PhD research. With some preliminary research into the education system itself, I found that one of the biggest

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[141] Appalachian State, MA Education Media.

issues is teacher education, which is not uniform throughout the Czech Republic. I chose to combine my interests in media with this problem and research how efficient or inefficient media literacy education is in teaching programmes.

My background and academic interests lie in politics and media, which have influenced my decision to conduct research on Czech media literacy policy and the policies of teacher education programmes. I would recommend that others who conduct a large piece of research choose a topic that is of genuine interest to them because it can impact your work in many ways, and it can definitely effect how much time and effort goes into the finished product. My research focus has been both tedious and tiresome, but it has never been uninteresting.

Choosing a research method to compliment my focus and aims did not go entirely as planned, but I learned that it is important to work with what you can. I initially wanted to conduct a survey of students in Pedagogical Faculties, but again time did not permit this, as it was a large task. Additionally, obtaining interviews was difficult and required multiple emails to university professors before responses were acquired. In the end, my supervisor helped me realize my research on university curriculum and national education policies were the most significant pieces of research I had and were critical in my overall evaluation of media literacy's role in teacher education.

When I began writing about media literacy and teaching programmes, my work did not follow a linear pattern from introduction to conclusion. So much research went into different areas (the Czech education system, Czech education policy, media literacy policies, universities with teaching programmes, and best practice in teaching) that it was sometimes necessary to jump from writing about one section to focusing on another, based on a new piece of research. For example, after writing about the nine pedagogical faculties I learned that there are also other faculties where teachers may obtain degrees. This new information forced me to go back and re-edit what I had already written, but it ultimately paid off because each new piece of research added something that might have been missing otherwise.

Overall my research went well, and I was able to find the information needed to make a conclusion about media literacy policy in Czech primary and secondary schools. Globally research in the area of media literacy is still very new, and in the Czech Republic there has not been an overwhelming amount of study on media

literacy for teachers. Thus, my research has shed light on the subject and will hopefully cause more discussion about media's role in education.

Appendix A: Interview Transcripts

Interview with Faculty Member from a Department of Informatics

Section 1

A) What do you know about media literacy, if anything?

> *Now media literacy is important, as many new things are available to use. The internet is one thing that many people do not know how to use well and do not see the benefits as well as what is bad about it. Media literacy is understanding how media could be used and its effect.*

B) In your opinion does media literacy mean understanding how computers and digital technologies work? Please explain why or why not.

> *Yes it does, but also understanding what those things do. It means understanding how a computer works and what it does for who is using a computer.*

C) If you were told media literacy is:

> 1) Access to media (television, computers, advertisements, news stories, and all other devices, which export messages)
> 2) Knowledge about how to create one's own media
> 3) The ability to analyse how media affects the user and decipher the benefits of it

Do you think it is an important subject for children to learn in school? Please explain why or why not.

> *This is an interesting definition (3 points). Based on this, yes. Children should learn media literacy in school. It is fundamental, but now it is not in schools correct way, I think it is sometime computers, but no talking about what a computer does.*

D) Are you aware that media education is one of the cross-curricular subjects that should be taught in primary and secondary schools?

> *Yes, but as above. It is not in correct way.*

Section 2

A) Are you aware of any media literacy courses that are offered at your university? What are these?

We do not have media literacy exactly, but some courses speak about it in our department, although only little.

B) Are there any courses, which focus on digital literacy (digital media or technology courses)?

Yes many courses in our department are on technology, but on how to use.

Section 3

A) Do you think that teacher-training programmes at your university give enough courses that focus on teaching practice? If not, how do you feel this could be changed?

I am not certain of what 'teaching practice' means. If practice for job then they give as much, but also we have to give training on subjects.

B) From what you know about media literacy, do you think more media literacy courses for future teachers would be a good thing? Please explain your answer.

Yes. Media literacy is now important and could be good in training of teachers.

C) From what you know about media literacy, do you think more courses in the subject for future educators could then improve teaching in primary and secondary schools? Please explain your answer.

Yes. Children like media and teachers using it will help in schools.

Interview with Faculty Member from Department of Pre-Primary and Primary Education

Section 1

A) What do you know about media literacy, if anything?

I believe it is understanding computers and things similar, but I do not know really.

B) In your opinion does media literacy mean understanding how computers and digital technologies work? Please explain why or why not.

Yes because in my opinion it is with all the computers and technology we have that many do not understand how it works.

C) If you were told media literacy is:

    1) Access to media (television, computers, advertisements, news stories, and all other devices, which export messages)
    2) Knowledge about how to create one's own media
    3) The ability to analyse how media affects the user and decipher the benefits of it

Do you think it is an important subject for children to learn in school? Please explain why or why not.

> *I did not think of TV and all media, but yes children are now learning about this in school. It is important.*

D) Are you aware that media education is one of the cross-curricular subjects that should be taught in primary and secondary schools?

> *Yes.*

Section 2

A) Are you aware of any media literacy courses that are offered at your university? What are these?

> *We offer ability to study computers, technology, and media in our Department of Technology. I do not know exact names.*

B) Are there any courses, which focus on digital literacy (digital media or technology courses)?

> *Yes, written above.*

Section 3

A) Do you think that teacher-training programmes at your university give enough courses that focus on teaching practice? If not, how do you feel this could be changed?

> *No. This is problem they talk of now. It could be better if more teachers were in practice before they would graduate*

B) From what you know about media literacy, do you think more media literacy courses for future teachers would be a good thing? Please explain your answer.

> *Yes, but also we need teachers to teach it. I do not know if we know of how to teach media literacy. Firstly we need to learn.*

C) From what you know about media literacy, do you think more courses in the subject for future educators could then improve teaching in primary and secondary schools? Please explain your answer.

> *It is very important in primary school. More courses are a good idea also look at above answer.*

Interview with Faculty Member from Department of Primary Education

Section 1

A) What do you know about media literacy, if anything?

> *Media literacy I believe is knowing about what is media's purpose and how television and stories there say things about society. It is being knowledgeable about how media has an effect.*

B) In your opinion does media literacy mean understanding how computers and digital technologies work? Please explain why or why not.

> *Not exactly, it is understanding how the things the computer does effect people.*

C) If you were told media literacy is:

> 1) Access to media (television, computers, advertisements, news stories, and all other devices, which export messages)
> 2) Knowledge about how to create one's own media
> 3) The ability to analyse how media affects the user and decipher the benefits of it

Do you think it is an important subject for children to learn in school? Please explain why or why not.

> *With this definition media literacy is very big thing. That is why it would be important for schools.*

D) Are you aware that media education is one of the cross-curricular subjects that should be taught in primary and secondary schools?

> *Yes.*

Section 2

A) Are you aware of any media literacy courses that are offered at your university? What are these?

If it is the same definition... no.

B) Are there any courses, which focus on digital literacy (digital media or technology courses)?

Yes in the technologies department.

Section 3

A) Do you think that teacher-training programmes at your university give enough courses that focus on teaching practice? If not, how do you feel this could be changed?

Probably no there are not enough, but this is hard to change. It would need to be changed through a long process but is talked of now at least.

B) From what you know about media literacy, do you think more media literacy courses for future teachers would be a good thing? Please explain your answer.

I do think they would be good thing. All need to learn of media and what it means and how it could be used.

C) From what you know about media literacy, do you think more courses in the subject for future educators could then improve teaching in primary and secondary schools? Please explain your answer.

Teaching is in need of improvement always. Media literacy is definitely not bad and might help teachers to make students have interest in school.

Interview with Faculty Member from Department of Technology and Technical Education

Section 1

A) What do you know about media literacy, if anything?

Media literacy is new subject with new technology. It is just now becoming studied.

B) In your opinion does media literacy mean understanding how computers and digital technologies work? Please explain why or why not.

It can be this and also more. It depends on how it is viewed I think.

C) If you were told media literacy is:

1) Access to media (television, computers, advertisements, news stories, and all other devices, which export messages)
2) Knowledge about how to create one's own media
3) The ability to analyse how media affects the user and decipher the benefits of it

Do you think it is an important subject for children to learn in school? Please explain why or why not.

These are good and make sense. In schools children should of course learn media literacy and have education that uses media, but in Czech Republic this is not easy. Sometimes it cannot happen because teachers don't know media literacy.

D) Are you aware that media education is one of the cross-curricular subjects that should be taught in primary and secondary schools?

No, but computers are in schools.

Section 2

A) Are you aware of any media literacy courses that are offered at your university? What are these?

There are some in several areas with the media education, e.g. in   the field of didactical use of internet, usage of the primary sources as news,evaluation of obtained information, but more technical. There is "Education about medias and its utilization" or "Media education - Introduction to interpreting mass media".

B) Are there any courses, which focus on digital literacy (digital media or technology courses)?

Of course, there are many in this.

Section 3

A) Do you think that teacher-training programmes at your university give enough courses that focus on teaching practice? If not, how do you feel this could be changed?

It is hard to say because we need to teach knowing the subjects also and practice and find balance of these two. How much do you believe there needs be? I believe more could be good, but as I say it needs balance.

B) From what you know about media literacy, do you think more media literacy courses for future teachers would be a good thing? Please explain your answer.

> *Of course, media literacy courses would be a good thing, they just have not been studied enough yet as to how it would be put into university programs.*

C) From what you know about media literacy, do you think more courses in the subject for future educators could then improve teaching in primary and secondary schools? Please explain your answer.

> *Yes this would improve teaching in schools because it shows teachers how to use media and how it can help teach and also does this for students in schools. It is becoming very important, and will be bigger soon I believe.*

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