

## **UKLA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2010**

*'The Changing Face of Literacy: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow'*

### **Proposal for Symposium**

**Working Title: Teaching Media Literacy in Primary Schools**

#### *Overall Aims of the Symposium:*

This panel brings together researchers from the UK and Austria conducting research in the field of media literacy education. While media education has a long history in some national education systems, it is still relatively marginal to the curriculum. However, there are some significant signs that this situation is changing, as policy-makers become more convinced of the need for constructive educational responses to children's engagement in media and consumer culture.

All three papers address issues of media education in primary schools – that is, how do young people learn about media, and how does their understanding and competence develop over time? What can teachers do to extend children's expectations of moving image media? How can one introduce fundamental concepts and questions of media literacy to teachers in a different national context?

#### **1. Overcoming Barriers to Effective Learning Progression in Media**

**Education:** David Buckingham, Andrew Burn, Becky Parry, Mandy Powell, Institute of Education, London

This presentation will draw on a 3-year project researching media literacy from 5 to 16 in 2 secondary and four primary schools in England. We will focus here on primary schools, and on two aspects of media education: the importance of including children's own knowledge and experience of media, and the role of sustained practical work. The emphasis will be on overcoming three specific barriers to effective learning progression in media education: the gap between teachers' and students' media cultures (and those recognised by the school curriculum); the challenges of building recursive experiences of practical production work; and the challenges of supporting children's work across a range of semiotic modes and media when school literacy curricula continue to privilege print literacy.

#### **2. Broadening Children's Media Experience:**

Cary Bazalgette, MEA

Most of the arguments for media education at any level are focused on children's engagement with mainstream media content. But most mainstream content is necessarily accessible to a wide audience range in order to maximise its market reach. It is arguable that children rapidly master the codes and conventions of mainstream children's entertainment and are ready for more challenging material by the time they start school. What can teachers do to extend children's expectations of moving image media? This paper will explore some options.

#### **3. Key Concepts revisited: Teaching Teachers about Media Literacy.**

Sigrid Jones, University of Vienna

Working with teachers in a range of in-service-courses and research projects on media literacy in a non-English speaking country poses some difficult challenges: How can one introduce fundamental concepts and questions of media literacy within a limited timeframe? What are these fundamental concepts anyway?

There are many possible theories to start from - ranging from the “Key Concepts of Media Literacy” (Representation, Language, Genre, Institution, Audience) in English speaking educational discourses to various definitions of “Medienkompetenz” in German theory (such as by Aufenanger, Baacke, Spanhel and Tulodziecki). Based on an ecological understanding of literacy (Barton 2007) and the lived media cultures of children we draw on research concerned with media education, media literacy and multimodal literacies (Kress 1996, Buckingham 2003, Marsh 2004) from a range of perspectives. This paper propose some ideas of how to introduce basic concepts of media literacy by broadening existing ideas about reading and writing and using the “circuit of culture” as a metaphor for an ecological view of literacy. These concepts provide core themes, which are revisited over time, building on previous experiences and knowledge, so both children and teachers may progressively expand their understanding about media and acquire more sophisticated skills in multimodal text production.