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THE EXPERIMENTING COMMUNITY

The researcher´s final report

on the EU-project

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Content

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The project

This is the researcher´s final report on the EU-project *MediaPLAYINGcommunities*, that took place during a two year period in 2007-2009. It was placed under the Transversal Programme as part of the Lifelong Learning Programme. The project aimed at making communities centred around kindergartens and pre-school environments. These communities centred on using digital media in a media playing way to communicate and produce. The inspiration was how children played with media and the idea was to make this inspiration a common way for all in the community.

Play as cultural expression was invited into a pedagogical space that at the same time was the starting point for a community in dialogue with other communities in the project and in Europe. The project had to be highly inventive to reach its intentions, because it was unfolding ideas and priorities on new ground.

9 partners in 8 countries took part in the project and it did among other things result in a web page, a handbook and a documentary on media playing as a term, a tool and a way to be a community. The countries participating were Austria, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Rumania, Spain and United Kingdom. The contact between these communities took place through mobilities, that included physical visits between the communities, inspirational visits in each community by an inspiration group in the project and on-line communication. The common ideas, examples of media playing and discussions on principles were transferred to local conditions and possibilities and then transferred back to the European community through the partner meetings, mobilities and on-line communication.

The design

The design for the quality assurance, the evaluation and the research processes were to use smaller and larger questionnaires including level one and level two indicators, interviews with key players in the project, informal conversations, evaluation activities of different kinds at the partner meetings and taking part in meetings, activities and the making of the documentary at the mobilities and the

inspirational visits. The level two indicators were developed in cooperation with the project managers and used for the evaluation in the final questionnaire.

The principle of the *co-constructing researcher* has been behind the different methods used during the project. The research itself is framed as *applied intervention* where the researcher takes an active part in problem solving the practical field. The researcher´s primary aim is to support the activities going on by inspiring and listening through examples and discussions. The research was inspired by the idea of a *collaborative process* where the participants in a given culture takes part in the collecting, analyzing and representing of knowledge. Finally the research methods were thought to *emerge* out of the given conditions, the possibilities, the situations and the questions that arise in the construction of the field. And finally the researcher also attempts to bridge the gap between the field in question and the academic community by informing both sides through the discussion of principles, methods and results.

The questionnaire is based partly on visual and collaborative principles. The intention has been to give the communities a voice in the questionnaire. The questionnaire is considered an important source for information, as the communities here present priorities, conditions, formulations and results that each partner made through the project. The MediaPLAYINGcommunities were among others defined through the strong use of visual media for production and communication. Therefore the questionnaire gives the possibility to answer in both images and text.

The way the interviews were conducted ware developed through the project. One thing was that they had to the different participants in the project like children, parents, partners and practitioners. Another thing was how to do them. In the process they were combined with the documentary makers need also to get interviews for the documentary. At each session the documentary maker was present with his camera and each interview were around 1 hour. They were all centred round photo-elicitation because the interview used photos as the focus.

The ongoing conversations have to be mentioned here as they could take place in many surroundings and settings. They could not be planned in advance but one could expect them to happen. They have a great value as they were one of the ways to get hold of discussions and experiences not yet formulated or not yet discovered by the partners.

The evaluation activities at the partner meetings and the mobilities included a variety of activities conducted by several different persons in the project. It was for example the production of a large common collage made by children, parents, partners and practitioners. It was video commentaries made by the partners in groups at partner meeting. It was the listing of a central vocabulary round media at a meeting with pedagogues at a local community. Methods like these fitted the situation, the

group of people, the amount of time available and very often a central element to be experimenting, productive, combining different ways of communicating and using some of the central tools, that was to be used later in the pedagogical activities

The activities at the mobilities and the inspirational visits were of the outmost importance to the principles of the research and to the project. Here the inspirational group joined or started media playing activities and meetings with both parents, pedagogues, educators and others. The idea was to support the community´s experimenting process of playing with media through presenting software, hardware and activities and joining ongoing activities already present at the local community.

The report is independent, does supplement the report made the project coordinator but does only express the researchers own views on the project. I have together with partners, practitioners and children been a central part of the development of ideas and activities in the project. In that sense I am not distanced from the project. But I do also as the researcher have an interest in finding out to what extent the project achieved its aims. In that sense I am distanced from the project.

The images in the report originate from the questionnaries and all permissions to use them in this report have been given. More information on the project and ideas to use media playing as a pedagogical strategy in a community can be found on the webpage www.mediaplaying.net. There it also will be possible to find further information on who the actual partners were. Quotations in the report are all from the questionnaires or the interviews conducted.

What did the communities think of the indicators?

The questionnaire opens with the level two indicators as they were formulated exactly halfway through the project. The level one and level two indicators in the project are formulated in questions according to the strongly experimental nature of this project. They were formulated as simple, precise and yet as

open questions as possible to be able to grasp the ongoing processes in each community that might not work in the same pace or with the exact same group of people under the same conditions. But in spite of these challenges the level two indicators formulated as questions seem to catch the central themes and principles at stake in the project. It is therefore important to se them as a result that shows the ability to ask the right questions. They can be seen in the questionnaire in the attachment.

The question on talking about important questions in life has to do with the fact that when a group of people have become familiar with a tool for reflection, production and communication the next question arises: What to talk about? What to examine closer together? The technical possibilities in the hardware and software used turned into a way to understand, produce and communicate. The question on community media play reflects the two sides of the project. The community building and the playing with the chosen digital media at the same time. The question on pedagogy reflects the situation that a central part of the work took place in pedagogical environments and that the pedagogy therefore was of importance to what happened. The question on the inspirational group reflects the attempt to make as many as possible capable of using the technology available. This includes also the question on how to involve people with handicaps and social difficulties.

The question on the contact between the different communities has to do with the attempt to make contact between the European community as such. The question on the mediaPLAYINGlanguage in a sense connects the other questions and deals with the special way the members of the community construct the ways they are together on what questions. In the questionnaire some tendencies can be seen:

a)   The important questions in life

Here are mentioned some basic questions in the community. How the relationships between parents and children changed so that children became those who knew. The role of fathers and the role of mothers. How the relations between both educators, parents and children changed because they were playing together. The facilities for children around Europe. It included questions like "Who am I?" and "Who are you?" It included a vitality and it depended on the experimental processes. It included discussions on the processes and the use of media. It could be questions on themes like "What is a snake?".

b) A community media play

The answers here fall in two areas. Inside the community it is mentioned that all age groups were brought together and a lot of participants took part. The community functioned as a framework for project activities. A real sense of community were developed especially through the mobilities and the inspirational visits.

c) A pedagogy that supports a community

The answer here is that the pedagogy did support the community. It consisted among others of a process where problems and solutions were discovered and in the end became activities. The pedagogy itself did not seem to change, only the means. Different age groups were involved and the meetings with the inspiration group that visited were fruit full for the development of the methods.

d) The many experts

The answers were that everybody got in one or another way experts. Both children, parents, staff and participants are mentioned. The term seems to cover those who to some extent are able to show to somebody else how a digital tool functions. Again the pedagogy is mentioned as the way staff found new ways of playing with children. The role of exploring is important as it was seen as a good way of qualifying future media experts. The role of the inspirational group are mentioned because it was of great importance that this group listened to understand what was going on at the community and that in itself encouraged members of the community to become their own experts.

e) The tools

Here the answers are quite clear: The digital media have been used as tools. Cameras, photos and Live Link-up are mentioned as tools. It is also mentioned that the tools are new toys too play with for different kinds of play. Cameras made of cardboard etc as a kind of props are also mentioned as important activities alongside traditional games.

f) The contact

Here are mentioned educators from other kindergartens in the area and between countries. Here are also mentioned students. The mobility events are again mentioned here as important to make contact and feel part of a larger community. Tools like

Facebook are mentioned here. Training courses for day care mothers and pedagogues and newsletters, images and newspapers in the local area.

g)   The language

The language seems to be a common code consisting of several elements. English is mentioned. These elements are named as the ability to play, a "hand-and feet" language, a non-verbal and visual language, the quest to experience, define and taste, a specific media vocabularity. It seems that the communication at the mobilities and the inspirational visits succeed in creating a new frame for the very communication itself.

h)   The special needs

This was more the case in some communities than others. In some communities there were not many participants with special needs, In others the work had that as focus. People with other cultural backgrounds than the majority in each country were also included in some of the communities. One community points out that the new use of media was new for all, not only for people with special needs.

The tendencies here show that when there was contact through the mobilities and the inspirational visits the different communities felt more like one community. The pedagogy might not be fundamentally changed, but there were a change in actual methods and relations between children, pedagogues and parents. Everybody involved seemed to have the possibility to influence and master what was going on in each community.

What did the communities do?

The following takes its departure in what the different communities actually did:

a) Access to technology – before and during the project

The situation on technology was not alike neither before nor during the project, but fundamentally all partners got access to the technology required for this project. Scanners, printers, cameras, laptops, picture frames and editing software were bought. One partner describes two different settings: A room before with traditional games and a room with children occupied with a laptop.

b) Media playing projects carried out

The actual projects carried out show a great variety in activities: Photo exhibitions, physical games, camera excursions, taking pictures of activities inside the kindergarten and outside, playing computer games, watching films, guessing games, taking pictures of the process of growth, photo stories, newspapers, images of the alphabet, individual photo books, pictures of the city, summer party based on oscar-awards, looking at screens to se yourself, taking pictures using mirrors to make illusions. The duration of the different specific projects vary a lot. From nearly once every week to be put in the daily routines to one major project in all.

c) The everyday media playing

Everyday media playing outside the specific projects seem to cover a variety of activities. It is mentioned that there were no longer any need for specific preparations. It became part of the daily routine as a possibility or an activity. The children could borrow the cameras and use them themselves. The cameras were brought along when the children and the pedagogues went for the museum or the park. Pedagogues could introduce new equipment for the children and together with them brainstorm on and together explore how this equipment could be used. One community calls the possibility for the parent to meet their children in a new way for a *"Surprise Playground"*. It could be seemingly small things like filming a toy car chase or images showing friendship. Again is mentioned a long row of more or less formulated questions of a rather fundamental nature that came to be in these processes: "Who and where were I before?", "What is the relationship between reality and the image?" and even "What is media playing?".

d) Who joined?

The list of participants consist of project managers, parents, teachers, pedagogues, other kindergartens in the area, politicians and educators in the municipality. Fathers who take and active part in the project are mentioned by one partner. One community mentions the families who went to the mobilities.

Common for both the specific media playing projects and the everyday media playing are that they take place inside the kindergarten or on excursions out from the kindergarten. They are implemented in the daily life of the kindergarten and children are offered the possibility to experiment with the equipment available. The internet and the communication with somebody through here are not mentioned. The technology is first and foremost used to produce, edit and present images. There is though contact to others who normally are situated outside the kindergarten through activities together with parents or exhibitions of images. The informal meeting place between children, pedagogues and parents seems to be of importance and the open exploring approach seems to be important as well.

When the partners were asked to formulate in text and images what had been the most important during the project, several answers were given. One community talks about a process that contains both the integration, the experiment and the exhibition of the results. Another partner talks about handing the cameras over to the children and not let only the teachers use it. Yet another community talks about making it possible for the children to see the world for them selves as a kind of *"Memory Keepers"*. A community points at the integration of the camera in common events like birthday parties and or a fashion party with the theme nature. Another points at one specific day when the children played the fairy tale *"Billy Goat"* with figures and role play while photographing what they did. Yet another points a one certain project where the children made the alphabet with sticks and took pictures of it. Finally one community points at the exiting visits meeting other places and languages either by travelling or getting a visit.

In the communities own choice of what was the most important the diversity and the simultaneous connections of the MediaPLAYINGcommunities come to surface. The daily life, the major events, the physical contact with others and the experimenting pedagogy are connecting with and using the technology available. The pedagogy and the project open up for possibilities that the digital media and technology provide.

How were the communities challenged?

Here the answers fall in different categories. As the communities were asked to talk about challenges then this part of the report is a lot about difficulties and obstacles during the project.

a)   The technology

Several mention that it was a problem when the interface for the technology used only was written in English for those who did not have English as their mother tongue. All mention the technical problems with no access, lack of connections, malfunctioning software and break downs of computers. Some mention that simple physical games with cameras and the use of webcam was much more easy to use. The central webpage it self went through changes twice to accommodate the needs of the communities. There was not enough content in the beginning, but when the content was uploaded it worked rather well.

c) The on-line communication

In the second part of the project a number of services on the internet were introduced as a part of an ongoing process to find which services could be used for what. The photo service Flickr were introduced to exchange photos between communities. The social media Facebook were introduced to be used by the project managers a long with First Class. The on-line phoning tool Skype and the video streaming service Bambuser were used for establishing immediate contact between communities.

e)   The local project managers

This group in the project was responsible for at lot of different processes at the same time. They had to make sure that the framework round the concrete activities supported the practitioners involved. But at the same time they them selves also had to experiment and communicate to the world outside project about the emerging principles of processes that developed while they were explaining them to parents, decision-makers and practitioners. Some mention that they learned how to argument and to use demonstration as part of their argument. Another mentions that it is still difficult to explain the whole dimension of media playing. They also had to maintain the communication between the partners and the communities. The moment this did not work decisions were not carried out or a community felt left alone.

f)   The staff

There was a large interest by the practitioners involved in the project on media playing as a pedagogical approach. Only one community mentions explicit the problem with the other members of the staff, that did not show any or little interest in the use of media in the kindergarten. The experience of the researcher and the inspiration group was that the practical development of ideas and methods tended to depend on a few practitioners in each community. This development could not rely on the use of media in their training but had to rely on their ability to unfold central parts of their pedagogy to do so. As the report will show later there is a large potential among the staff members to do so. Some staff members had to start from scratch when implementing media in their daily routines and pedagogical strategies.

b) The parents

The parents obviously had some comments and worries on behalf of their children. Some parents were worried that the safety on the internet, others raised moral issues concerning the use of television. They also commented on how children should use equipment that was expensive and easy to damage. They also wanted to know why children in a kindergarten should use it. These concerns disappeared through the project when they realised what it was about.

c) The children

The children are never mentioned as a problem. On the contrary they seem to just use the technology. One community mentions though that the children with special needs had to have the techniques specially tailored to them. Another community mentions that the pedagogues together with the children started to experiment to use technology neither of them felt familiar with.

The challenges through the project were largely overcome by the different participants in the project and were solved in en experimenting process. The webpage and the use of the different social services are such examples that also have to with some more fundamental changes in the media society. The internet now offers the possibility for the users to generate and exchange information themselves and to a certain extent on their own terms. This is what is called *Web 2.0*, where *Web 1.0* in short can be framed as the use of the internet to show information.

The webpage in the beginning had the purpose of being a place where one could get information on the project and get ideas on how to do media playing not matter if you are a part of the project or another visitor form somewhere else. As such the webpage functions very well. At first it was difficult for the webmaster to handle the large amount of material because it this persons responsibility to sort out and upload photos and video. The it was solved by asking the communities in advance to choose the material, they wanted uploaded by the webmaster.

The webpage did not function as a blog or a chat room where everybody in the project could upload material themselves and debate topics. But the project did as mentioned above try out several social services to establish a communication between the communities that was about the generating and the exchange of information.

The staff and the local project managers first used time to get hold of the equipment needed, after that used time to establish the community locally including the different kinds of visits before finally getting on-line. This meant that the communities first met the digital media inside the kindergarten in processes, which relied on both the pedagogy and the children. Inside this physically defined area with space for both organized activities and informal playing and experimenting children and staff seemed to find their way. Their relationships were among others based on play, movement and body and cultural processes. Here the pedagogues, the children and even the local project managers had either some experiences in advance or an idea of how to proceed. When the technology was simple to use then it seemed easier to start the experimenting processes but never the less these processes were carried through.

During these experiments with the on-line communication between the communities not all attempts succeeded but gradually the project became aware of how to understand the possibilities in the on-line communication.

What is the potential of the pedagogy?

There seem to be a central and fundamental ability to deal with change in the ways the communities met media. When asked how and when children and pedagogues approach media and media playing some interesting principles come forward. They meet the media inside and outside, in playgrounds, in all rooms in the kindergarten, in the workshop, in the streets of the town and at the children´s home. At these different places the children both take part in arranged activities with given tasks and are allowed to go on for them selves.

The following quotations are all from the questionnaire. The way of playing with the media is called for *"open-ended experiences"* or *"open work"*, where *"…there is no right or wrong. Changes are part of the processes"*. It is *"…an opportunity to explore new learning"*. It is also called an *"…approach of shared curiosity, children gaining control over their images and creative manipulation of materials."* and it is also called *"…autonomy in learning"*.

In spite of problems with not knowing the technology and the need to get time to do there seems to be an ability to experiment. A combination of pedagogical methods seems to be required to do so. It is more just the needed access to the equipment that is at stake here. It is the transformation of experiments to everyday activities, from questions to answers. In this process children are allowed to do what they would do with other toys. They deal with the technology in self-organized playing and during this they find ways to use it. In this process pedagogues sometime take

part as those who know how to use the technology and sometimes take part without knowing in advance. No matter what there exist a knowledge of how to organize these experimenting processes.

If increased use of on-line technologies is treated in the same way then there should be no doubt that children and pedagogues could find a use for these technologies that goes even further than in the present project.

One might even suggest that the beneath different pedagogical intentions across different countries and cultures there in Europe exist a common sensibility towards what children has an interest in, what they know about and what they want. For some it might be an elaborate strategy that inflect everything that goes on in activities and playing between children and pedagogues. For others it might a known fact among practitioners because they every day observe children in self-organised activities and playing. But for all children´s own competences might have an increasing importance.

What are the principles behind the project?

Finally the communities were asked to formulate the terminologies and the principles behind the project as they saw them and as they worked with them through the project activities. They are the result of a process where terminologies and principles were discussed and sketched through the practical work.

a) *The community*

A community is defined rather alike by the communities. It consists of different levels: *"Firstly it is a small community in the kindergarten comprising teachers, children and parents. Then it is a larger idea comprising teachers, parents and children from other kindergartens and even a larger one comprising children, teachers and parents from other European institutions."* What makes it a

community on all three levels is that everybody is *"…engaged in a shared idea across a variety of countries… exploring practice and learning from this focus."* Cultural institutions, artists, media businesses are also mentioned.

b)   Media playing

This term is explained by the partners like this. It is *"…a new way to mingle children, teachers, parents and ICT. Media playing is seen … as the next step as regards the role of ICT in kindergartens, ICT in people´s lives, as regards their relation to their children, the role of ICT in children´s play culture.".* It is *"…a new way of communicating by the use of a common media playing language".* It is *"…new techniques for playing, self-expression and communication. Traditional games and new technology merge and create something new with using as much fantasy as possible."*

One community sums it up like this: Media playing is *"…enabling further reflection on our lives through the use of photographs, cameras … playing with images and allowing the play to create something new interesting and fun. It encourages equality between all ages and shared curiosity to interact with the world."*

c)   The mobility

The mobility is defined as a possibility to meet and get inspiration. *"It is a chance to share and receive information"* and to make *"…new experience touching by hand new school environments, different teaching methodologies, new parents-children relationships, different pedagogical approaches".* It is even formulated by children and adults that joined the mobility that *"…the trip w as life changing and that they really made friends…".* It *"...loosened all of our ways of viewing the world and created a real cultural exchange of ideas".* It has to be mentioned though that the children did not have much time at the mobilities to get acquainted and establish relations with each other through playing and activities in the kindergartens.

d)   On-line communication

Here the answers are about a potential. It *"…made everything quick, accessible and fluid…"* and *"…everybody could stay in contact with everybody and exchange opinions about the project…".* One *"…got in touch in other participants which otherwise would have been very difficult."* Not all partners were satisfied with the level of communication, but as one partner stated: *"…we have just laid down the foundation for this."*

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What seems to be important in the project is that the community on a European level is a place to exchange views, meet differences and try out ideas around a shared centre. This functions best when meeting physically. The shared idea is that of media playing as tool for reflection, play and communication.

Media play is a term that is no more than 25 years old. It originally focused on how children transformed inspiration from television in their own role play. It also soon focused on how children used technology in their play culture. Through the years important research has been conducted in pedagogical institutions and it has been examined how media play could be part of a pedagogical context. With this project the term is again debated and is now connected closely to the idea of community across age and position in a pedagogical setting. This setting even includes the internet as an important dimension.

Media play has left the academic setting and the Nordic context and is now part of a wider European context that includes both practitioners, academics and children. Media play belongs to a dynamic and changing group of people and can be developed further on from here.

Central is the notion of play. It is here in their self-organized play that children have cultural competences to meet media and use them for their own purposes. One might even suggest that there exist a common play culture across Europe where children have been exchanging ways of playing when they have met. Today this exchange also happens through media and in media. Today it might depend on the parents, the teachers, the pedagogues and even the common policy in EU if this common culture should be enhanced and valued. At least has this project pointed at the possibility to make play and experiment a common field of interest for children, parents, pedagogues and teachers.

What do the communities see as the future?
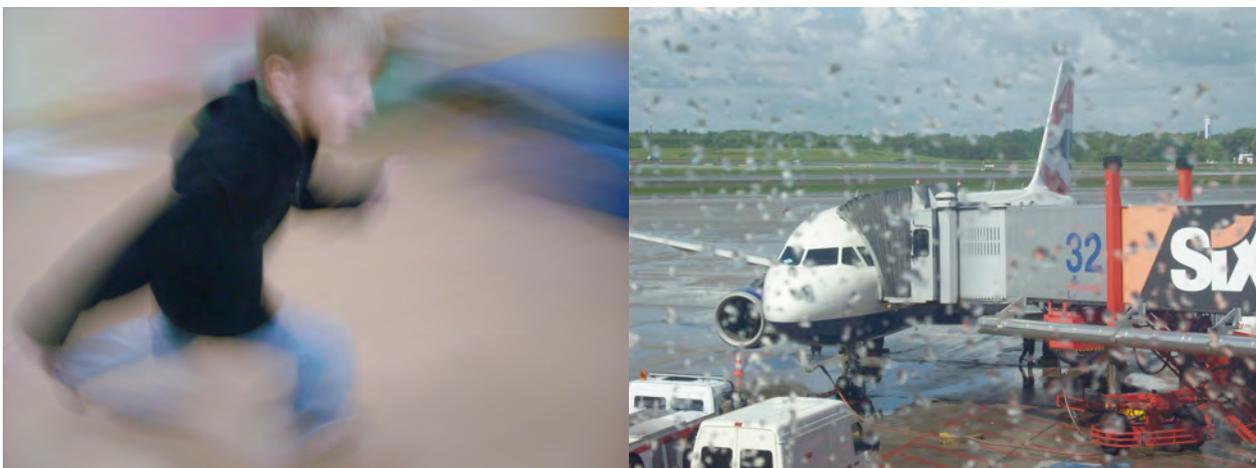
This question is about the communities immediate judgement of what the near future will bring.

a) Next year

The communities mention a variety of future activities. They want to continue with their organized activities on media and look for opportunities. One partner talks about time to realise ideas and another talks about the need to make sure that there at all institutions involved are pedagogues which is trained to use media in a playing way. Another is very concrete and wants to focus on the fluent use and immediate availability of videos. The communities also want to get on-line. Several partners will start courses and dissemination for other pedagogues and institutions. One partner is taking part in the building of a new nursery and will implement a media pedagogy here.

b) The eight EU-key competences

One community foresees a new law of education based on the EU-competences. Another wants to make the competences more visible for parents and teachers and want to include the support of the families. Another mentions the need for competences in foreign languages and processes of learning to learn. One wants to do more learning through playing and integrate media in the learning environment. One wants to continue the processes of integration of children with special needs.

There is no doubt that these statements have a possibility to come true. They are all based on the activities in the resent project. A lot of the technology needed is in place and experiences using it are present. Some are already in progress and has started their future activities. For instance has one community already offered the first courses and another have made a local network between four kindergartens that is going to be used for further activities. Another has already made it part of their teaching of future pedagogues.

The principles of the EU-competences have been present in the project in many ways. Communication in both the mother tongue and the foreign tongue has been needed to be able to communicate. The spoken language has been part of media playing language that included body, image and cultural processes. The competence in mathematics and science are also present in the project through the ongoing experiments with media and technology themselves. Learning to learn and the sense of initiative and entrepreneurship are also quite evident in the project as all processes have been

focussing on the ability to learn together in informal settings with your own initiative as the vehicle for construction of common meaning-making.

The social and the civic competences are also very close to the nature of the project as everything has been concentrating on communicating with each other in each community and the other communities. The way the communicating has been done is through play and that points to the last competence on cultural awareness and expression. The different cultures have met through this project but especially has children´s play culture been the centre of attention. There has been a cultural awareness towards play as cultural expression in its own right and as an invaluable resource for the way children, parents and pedagogues can meet media and become citizens in Europe through unfolding play. The centre for all this has been the development of the digital competence.

But the technical use of software and hardware has not been the only understanding of digital competence developed through this project. This project has expanded the idea of being able to access, store, produce and send information to include the competences of being able to discuss points of vital interest and the competences in children´s culture of being able to use any kind of media as a source of material while playing.

The research process

There are of course some obvious limitations for a researcher who wants to work through applied intervention. It is difficult to be present in all the important processes throughout a practical project, which takes place in 8 countries at one time. Therefore it was needed to join the inspirational visits and the mobilities and to work closely together with the documentary maker to obtain as much knowledge as possible.

The researcher and the inspirational group succeeded in demonstrating examples and discussing principles in equal dialogue with the local project managers and the practitioners. All answers indicate that this part worked quite well. The content and form of the visits by the group and the researcher were developed through the project to show parents and practitioners what their own children were capable of. Some partners needed more dialogue and more time together with the group and the researcher than others.

In the application it was stated that interviews and questionnaires would be conducted. In the project they were ranked alongside the intervention according to the research principles to be able to support the development of the project in the best way through concrete examples and dialogues. The interviews were also framed through the project to support the documentary maker in his process. The interview situation was increasingly thought of as both a way to get knowledge and support the

knowledge building in the project itself. Pedagogy, documentation and research were closer and closer connected during the project. The collaborative side of the research was not that unfolded but was started. All activities can be seen as collaborative in the sense that children, parents and practitioners supported the research process by taking an active part in the production of knowledge for both research and the project.

Conclusion

The project MediaPLAYINGcommunities reached an impressive amount of activities and documented them in the handbook on media playing, the guides, the web page, the documentary and the disseminations locally, regionally and nationally. The local project managers, the children, the staffs, the parents and others participated in experimenting processes where the answers were not evident when the project began. The pedagogy was a good starting point for the development of common play in a community. The pedagogy was also anchored in a physical setting that supported the ongoing processes and was also be the starting point for the use of internet. The activities depended to a certain extent on relatively few practitioners when realizing ideas and methods.

The project has developed the central term media play further and made it both open for new interpretation and yet operational at the same time. The research has supported the project through applied intervention. The eight EU-competencies were activated, used and commented upon. A common play culture in Europe seems to be a possibility to support and enhance.

The project MediaPLAYINGcommunities has clearly outlined both methods and principles for a pedagogy and a community that can experiment with media and technology that can ask vital questions about life in a pedagogical context and that has the potential to transform kindergartens and pre-school environments to place to be and to become citizens of Europe. A new project here named just *"MediaPLAYINGcommunities 2"* could focus on the following:

> *a) The research*
>
> The research should continue the working on the lines of applied intervention. The collaborative side should be enhanced. This could for instance happen though the production of several smaller documentaries made by the documentary maker, the children, the practitioners and the researcher, uploaded on the webpage and social services like Youtube and simultaneously be used as communication addressed to persons, groups or communities elsewhere in Europe. A future evaluation and research design should reflect the position of research as applied right from the start.

b) The term Media play

This term could be developed further by a further development of the potential in the pedagogical approach to children, play and community. The potential here is to focus on situations where everybody together experiment and play to produce and communicate. But also to identify the connections between children´s self-organised play in their play culture and the common play in a community. It also has to been investigated how playing and media playing can be invited inside the pedagogical spaces to support processes that focus on being a citizen in Europe and using and developing media to be just that. Media playing in a pedagogical context has the ability to simultaneously examine media it self and any theme or departure of interest that might come up.

c) The communication

A new project could start by continuing where the this project stopped and right away continue establishing meaning full on-line communication between the communities by using the social services and blogs. Mobilities of a longer duration could be needed to support the children when meeting each other at the mobilities. The practitioners could be brought closer to the project by letting them be part of the partner meetings. Pedagogy, community-building and research processes could be brought closer together in mutual supportive processes. Media playing in the right pedagogical setting even has an including power between children and pedagogues, the social strong and the social weak.

d) The training

The second project could focus on how to implement the experiences of MediaPLAYINGcommunities in training of staff members and students to be pedagogues and pre-school teachers in the different countries in Europe and as a common strategy on an European level. The idea is to qualify both the existing and the future staff members through the media playing pedagogical methods and strategies to be able to use the potential existing in the present pedagogy. This could be done as an in-practise training courses that includes the whole staff in a community, students from regional and national education systems, the local kindergartens and pre-school environments and even a research position that is building on applied intervention. It is the moment when reflection and practical action is brought closely together where both

children, practitioners, educators and researcher together can enhance a process of development and implementation.

The pedagogy has proven to have a lot of potential when children, pedagogues, parents and others met media and technology in MediaPLAYINGcommunities. The staff could need further support in implementing media playing in the daily routines and in the construction of new methods and playing approaches. But the central core in a *"MediaPLAYINGcommunities 2"* could be to present and implement experiences, pedagogical approaches and research strategies in the education system it self.

A perspective that in an even further perspective could fuel the process towards an education system fit for the European future could be framed as *"Lifelong learning depend on lifelong playing"*. Media playing in a pedagogical setting exist as a vital commencing force because children, pedagogues and other are allowed to play and to experiment to meet the challenges of the future they face in Europe. Media playing as a pedagogical strategy can be transformed into models, courses and activities including all parties if the strategy takes place in and close to the everyday practice. The eight EU-competencies can become lived life and formulated education.

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