

mPc – Media playing communities

Media Playing Communities (mPc) is an EU project with participation from Hungary, Romania, Spain, Austria, Germany, UK, Italy and Denmark. There are two participants from Denmark, and it is the Multimedia-team from Social and Health College in Aarhus and Knowledge Centre for ICT and Learning (KCIL), from University College of Copenhagen. The participants in the EU project are independent organisations who run kindergartens and partly educational establishments.



The project, applying to kindergarten children, the employees in kindergartens, the parents to children in kindergartens, pedagogical advisers and decision-makers, got started in January 2008, and will run until the autumn 2009.

The project idea

Today, most children have access to countless different electronic media, and by the time they are through with nursery school, they have already entered into a discourse about their encounters with and use of media like Gameboys, computers, and mobile phones. Not all children have direct access to these electronic toys, yet they learn about them nonetheless through stories from older siblings and other children in the nursery as well as through their parents' fascination with "new electronic toys." This has led to the integration of these media into child lore at an early stage, as evidenced by the many games concerning and toys imitating mobile phones, laptop computers, and so on.

At the other side, the electronic media is not very important in pedagogical work. For that reason the basic idea in the project is to develop new ways to work pedagogical with ict and media in kindergartens, specially based on the playing aspect. At the same time it is the intention to develop new teaching materials for the employees in kindergartens and the parents to children in kindergartens, so they will be able to tackle the children's great fascination by ict and other new media.

KCIL s tasks in the mPc project

The mPc project is organised partly by transnational coordinating, transnational experiences exchange, and transnational collaboration about developing these above mentioned new ways to do pedagogical work with ict and media and materials about this. At the same time the individual participating institutions will be collaborating with kindergartens local area.

KCIL take part in the coordinator meetings, where the participants meet to coordinate the national activities and to make plans for the transnational activities. Furthermore KCIL has some tasks in the transnational project, we especially will bring into focus. KCIL have the responsibility for a thirty-minute documentary video, which has to document the project work in eight participating countries. KCIL has to take part of the developing guidance's for the local mPc groups and teaching materials for the employees in kindergartens and the parents to children in kindergartens, develop a design for evaluation and participate in research activities in relation to the project.

The other part of the project is the national part, where each participating collaborate with local kindergartens or similar institutions develop media playing communities, which is to establish environments in and about kindergartens, where children and adults will be able to learn about and play with ict and media.

Writing about kindergartens means that we will support the establishment of a collaboration (a media playing community) where children from the exchange products, has common projects about the use of media with other kindergartens, schools, cultural institutions or companies in the local area.

The local project group

In KCIL we have set up a project group including five precipitants with different competences in the field of media pedagogical.

The group precipitants are:

- Steen Søndergaard, Senior Lecturer in pedagogy and senior consultant in the Knowledge Centre. Has in many years worked with children and ict. Holds among other courses in Play with ict, Children and computer games and the computer as a creative tool.
- Frank Støvlebak, teacher at a training college, teaches media in Copenhagen Socialpedagogical College. For many years He has fought future preschool teachers and social educators in the use of video as a pedagogical tool.
- Per Roth, in-service course coordinator, has in many years worked with ict and virtual learning, and has in many years been initiator of different ict and media projects.
- Jakob Matthiesen, Senior Lecturer in Danish language and literature. Teaches the subject Danish, communication and culture at the preschool teacher training college and the subject Danish language and literature in the preparation course for refugees and immigrants in, Højvangseminariet, university college of social education. Holds among other courses in use of pictures as an alternative communication method.
- Helle Delfs, Lecturer in Danish language and literature. Teach the subject Danish, communication and culture at the preschool teacher training college and the subject Danish language and literature in the preparation course for refugees and immigrants in Højvangseminariet. Holds among other beginner courses in ict for employees in kindergartens.

Furthermore, it is possible that students from Københavns Socialpædagogiske Seminarium and/or Højvangseminariet will contribute to the project.

What we can offer 2 or 3 Danish kindergartens

When KCIL has made a arrangement with a kindergarten to join the project, we can offer visits in the kindergarten, where we will play with ict and media with the children and the adults, we offers education and guidance of the staff about use of and play with ict and media, we offers participation in a virtual network on the homepage <http://mediaplaying.net> and we offers a few children, parents and employees participation in one of two transnational meetings. Finally we offer support and guidance to establishing locale medieplaying network where kindergarten children will be part of a virtual collaboration with other institutions or companies in the local area, e.g. other kindergartens, schools, libraries or something like that.

The visits in the kindergartens



An essential part of the project is that KCIL attends direct in media play together with the children and adults in the kindergarten. The purpose of the media play is to show children and adults, how these new media can be used in old games, how new games will spring up with new media and how to involve the use of these new media in the everyday pedagogical work. At the same time KCIL wants to collect experiences from how media play take place in kindergartens.

KCIL has the possibility to bring necessary equipment, but we will like to have access to the equipment the kindergartens have at their disposal. We will arrange with the kindergartens how many visits we will do, when it suits into the kindergartens other plans. At the visits we will do different photo-, ict- and video activities together with the children. The number of children who will take part of the different activities negotiates with the staff, and will depend on the schedules in the kindergarten.

Training of the staff

KCIL offers general ict- and media training of the staff, with this intention that the staff will be able to take an active part of the activities we do with the children. At the same time the aim of the training of the staff is to make them able to continue the media activities them self.

The training will take place in the kindergarten or in one of the other kindergartens in the project. The management of the kindergarten decides if the courses give to the whole staff or only to a part of the staff who have to do the media playing. The kindergarten and KCIL makes an arrangement about the extension of the courses.

<http://mediaplaying.net>

mPc has a homepage: <http://mediaplaying.net>, which during the project will be set up various with opportunities for networking across borders. At first, the page will make it possible for the children to exchange drawings, but during the project period one will be working on developing new technologies or develop existing technologies to create an interactive world of children in kinder gardens, as we in the adult world call web2.



mPc's hjemmeside <http://mediaplaying.net>

On this site, individual partners and staff of local institutions could also share ideas for media play in the kindergarten. Each of jugglers' balls symbolizes the partners involved in the project. As you can see, there are two balls with the Danish flag, as there are two Danish partners.

So far, the website is an empty shell, and it is planned to fill it with materials, which we drafted together with the children in the kindergartens, and with materials developed in the light of staff in each kindergartens' experience with media play.

Transnational mobility

The project will be held twice as two transnational mobility meetings where individual children, parents and educators from the participating institutions can participate in a joint media play and exchange of experience. These two meetings are scheduled for 22nd - 25 September 2008 in Graz, Austria, in Udine, Italy and 4th - 7 May 2009 in Cornwall, England and in Aarhus, Denmark. At present it has not yet been not

yet decided, whether in the first round of meetings we will attend the meeting in Graz or Udine, and in the second round of meetings we will attend the meeting in Cornwall or Aarhus.

It is expected that there will be room for an average of one child with one parent per session, and as a starting point in the EU projects only possible to obtain grants for a part of the trip. The size of this subsidy depends on the number of participants what will be sent to the trans-national meetings.

Local "media play communities"

As the name implies, the project is also designed to work to establish local "media play communities" with the kindergarten as the centre. The idea is that virtual network can be established, where children in kindergarten can share drawings, pictures or similar parts with other local individuals, parents, schools and other day care centres, cultural institutions or local businesses.

The way these virtual networks can operate, will be developed during the project.

What is expected from the participating kindergarten?

It is described above, what the Knowledge Centre of ICT and Learning can offer in cooperation and the means and resources that come from the transnational project.

As a part of cooperation, it is expected that kindergarten has the opportunity:

- to give access to research
- to deliver employees for education
- to give response on partial developed teaching materials
- to give access to test new ict- and media play together with children
- to involve ict- and media play in the daily ordinary pedagogical work
- to be interested in transnational contacts
- to have a positive wide support to the project from the management
- to have a camera, video and / or computer, which the children has access to

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