

Games for Media and Information Literacy (MIL) – Developing Media and Information Literacy Skills in children through Digital Games Creation

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Abstract

The developments during the last three decades within the fields of both media and education studies have encountered controversy, yet "point toward a common ground of shared interests around people, practices, and processes in using digital media in different contexts and for different purposes" (Drotner and Erstad, 2014, p. 10). People's lives and experiences take place in an increasingly mediatized world where risks and affordances co-exist. Consequently, promoting media and information literacy (MIL) skills both in children and adults, is preparing them to be better exert their citizenship rights.

In this proposal the preliminary findings of the ongoing GamiLearning project (2015-2018), a research project that aims to promote critical and participative dimensions of MIL in children through the creation of digital games, will be presented and discussed. The project presents an innovative approach by arguing that, not only games can promote learning, but also the process of creation and development of videogames can promote MIL, more particularly operational, editorial, organizational and socio cultural skills as well as digital identities managing skills. Children aged 9 to 14 years old from Portugal and Austin participated in the study that included an experimental phase at schools where a curriculum for game design and game creation was taught, and students created their own games on issues as online security and digital identities in a constructivist perspective. Fieldwork was conducted in four schools and pre and post-test were applied. Results indicate an increase in some of the variables analyzed promoting a discussion on the potential of digital games creation as a reflexive tool to enhance MIL and promote critical thinking and participative skills.

Drotner, K., & Erstad, E. (2014). Inclusive Media Literacies: Interlacing Media Studies and Education Studies. *International Journal of Learning and Media*, 4(2), 19-31. Doi: 10.1162/IJLM_a_00092

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