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Using Design Fiction to Develop Critical Thinking in Media Education

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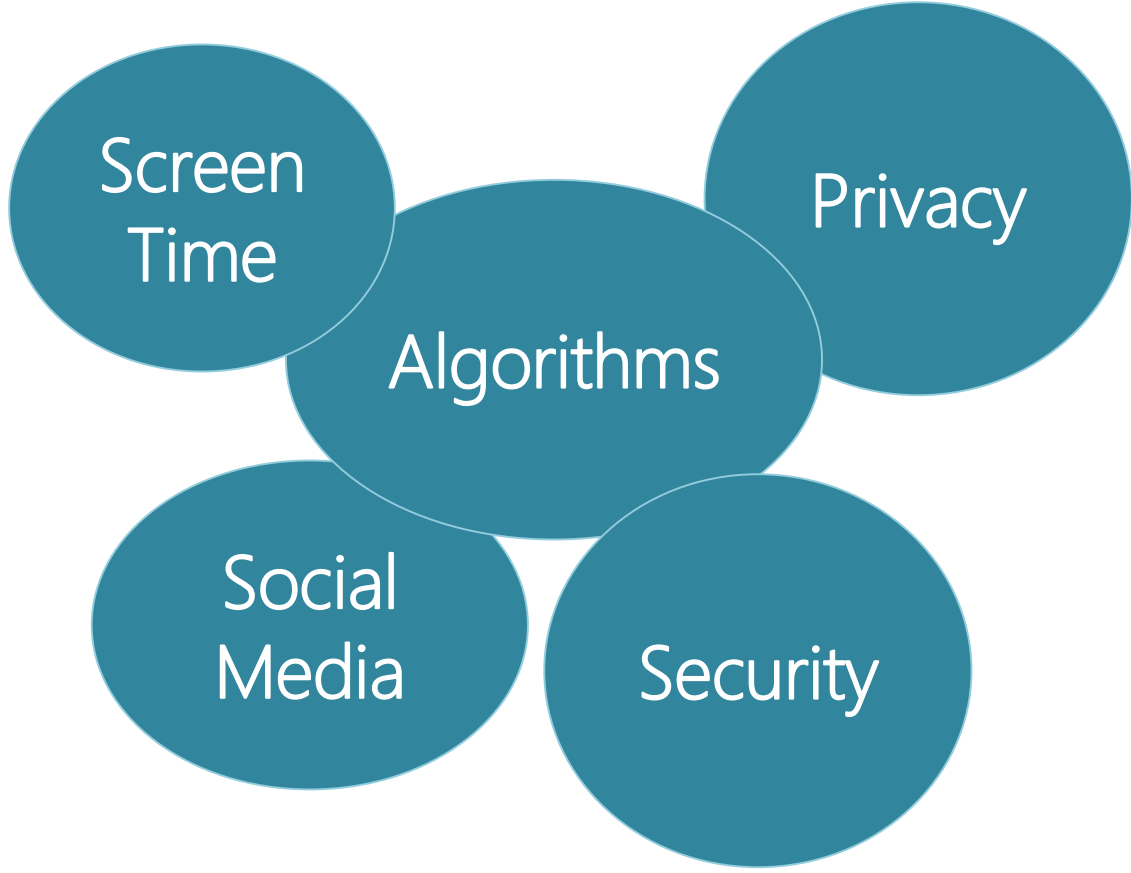


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I. Societal Problem



As Buckingham (2007) explains, “[i]n the context of media education, the aim is not primarily to develop *technical skills*, or to promote *'self-expressions'*, but to encourage a *more systematic understanding* of how the media operate, and hence to promote more *reflective ways of using them*” (p. 49).

- Need to focus media literacy on the development of **critical thinking** about the **broader issues** of the media ecosystem;
- Need to develop **methods** to **assess** critical thinking.

III. Theoretical Framework

Concept of “**critical inquiry**”, understood as “a *type of systematic questioning* that underlies the educational process, where citizens adopt a *scientific attitude* towards everything as opposed to a *non-critical attitude*”(Cospérec, 2018).

Developing students’ critical inquiry competence from...

	Key questions on design fiction	Design fiction practice itself
Principle	Analysing design fiction « texts » as media messages	Analysing design fiction as a design practice
Objective	Decoding design fiction texts	Imagining media technology prototypes
Approach	Key questions models in media education	Inquiry-based learning models

V. Educational Program

- 1
- **Introduction to New Technologies and Design Fiction**
 - Focus on artificial intelligence and algorithms
- 2
- **Prototyping and Stories Shooting**
 - Pupils as Designers: inventing an object in 2030
- 3
- **Product Placement**
 - Pupils as Influencers: promoting the object of another group
- 4
- **Press Conference**
 - Pupils as Journalists: finding the flaws or interests of the objects
- 5
- **Comic Books Creation**
 - Pupils as Scripwriters: investigating the consequences of their object in 2030
- 6
- **Comic Book Analysis and TV « debate »**
 - Pupils as Reviewers: reviewing others’ comic books and discussing current technology issues
- ## VII. Expected Results
- Building **new theoretical constructs** on the use of design fiction in the world of research and particularly in the field of media education;
 - Developing **design-based research methodology** in the context of media literacy education;
 - Approaching media literacy as a field of **inquiry** rather than as a set of skills that the individual must acquire to develop critical thinking abilities;
 - Developing and sharing an **educational program** based on the practice of design fiction with practitioners;
 - Developing and sharing an **evaluation grid** which assesses the critical inquiry competence with practitioners.
- ## II. Research Question
- How can design fiction help develop young people's critical questioning of new technologies and media ?
- Design fiction** = design practice that uses narrative structures to explore possible futures for technologies.

 - At the intersection of science fiction ad speculative design;
 - Production of ‘diegetic’ prototypes and speculative scenarios.
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- ## IV. Methodology
-
- Collaboration with **Action Médias Jeunes**, an association specialized in media education
 - 2018-2019: *Hack to the Future* project with third grade primary pupils and fifth and sixth grade secondary students.
 - 2020-2021: *Possible Futures* project with third grade secondary students
 - Children create **fictional technological prototypes** and **media productions** featuring them.
- Data Collected:
- Fields notes in a notebook via direct observations;
 - Pictures of the activities;
 - Audio recordings with focus groups ;
 - Pupils’ productions (designers’ books, video and comics);
 - Teaching materials;
 - Pupils’ questions from pre- and post-tests.
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- ## VI. Assessment Grid
- Classification of pupils’ questions from pre- and post-tests according to:
- The **media literacy concept**: refers to media literacy key concepts (Schilder and Redmond, 2019).
 - The **issue**: refers to the implications of the diegetic prototype or media text for the individual, a group, or society.
 - The **perspective**: refers to the point of view from which the student experiences the events of the story (fictional immersion vs. reality).
- | Is the question more or less critical? | |
|--|---|
| Not critical (0) | One Media Literacy Concept (except the implicit content) – No issue |
| Low order (1) | One Media Literacy Concept (except the implicit content) + Societal issue |
| Low order (2) | Implicit Content + Another Media Literacy Concept – No issue |
| High order (3) | Implicit Content + Another Media Literacy Concept + Societal issue |
| High order (4) | Implicit Content + Societal issue |
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