

'Developing Moving Image Literacy: Filmmaking in a Greek Primary School'

Konstantinos Voros

UCL-Institute of Education

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2023

I, Konstantinos Voros, confirm that the work presented in my thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Signed: Kostas Voros

April 2023

NUMBER OF WORDS (rounding to the nearest thousand and excluding bibliography, references and appendices): 95,000

Thesis Abstract

The thesis presents a small-scale case study of a group of Greek primary school children learning to make a film. The research questions revolve around the topic of how these children learn the language and metalanguage of the moving image and how they use it in their productions. The study takes the young learners through a series of stages, including working with still photographs, storyboards and filming and editing, exploring learning progression in relation to framing and composition, and also to cultural context and identity.

The analysis of the data, employing aspects of discourse and multimodal analysis, shows a complex cyclical relationship between conceptual learning and material practice. However, it also shows that the moving image involves a range of semiotic modes beyond the conventional affordances of filming and editing: that it is multimodal in ways not conventionally recognised in film and media education. The analysis also shows how the cultural resources drawn on by the children relate to their social and cultural contexts, and to their presentation of and exploration of their identities.

The study concludes by presenting a three-part framework that emerged from the analysis of the data in which the concept-practice relation is seen as Dialectical; the performative use of other modes, principally action and language, is seen as Dramatic; and the related identity work as well as the conceptual learning are seen as Developmental.

As well as this theoretical contribution to knowledge, the study contributes to the wider understanding of media and film education in the Greek context, hoping to offer researched recommendations towards the

introduction of media and film education into the official school curriculum in the country.

Impact statement

The purpose of this empirical study is to investigate and understand the development of an aspect of moving image media literacy, the language of the moving image, through its teaching and learning among Greek upper primary school children.

Despite the growing research in the field, we continue to lack a clear understanding of students' learning about moving image language, especially in the Greek context.

The thesis' overarching question therefore is about learning: how do primary school students learn the elements of moving image language through a pedagogy that involves a dynamic relation between analysis, practice and reflection.

As such, examination and analysis of the young learner's practices around moving image language learning and making (encompassing, for example, the role of the still photographs and the storyboards) will hopefully give rise to a better understanding of how these processes work and can be harnessed but also lead to a realisation of how problematic conventional notions of moving image language are if its inherited multimodal nature is not considered.

My research aims to contribute to these debates and it will complement recent scholarship on the subject of moving image language learning. It is anticipated that the findings will be valuable to different stakeholders with an interest in the broader field of media education, on theoretical, practical and policy levels.

Theoretical benefits to the discipline would include providing a framework for considering the learning of the moving image language, namely the 3Ds framework, the idea that moving image language learning is dialectic, dramatic and developmental. Researchers in the field can refer to this researched account to investigate further these aspects.

The benefits outside academia could occur to professional practice as well. Educators and media practitioners wishing to initiate media projects in their educational settings will find a useful road map for such an application. This will also benefit the young learners, especially those from less privileged backgrounds or with less media experience or access, particularly in making media.

On educational policy design level, the findings will offer recommendations to policy makers into enhancing the provision of media education in the Greek educational system, particularly towards the development of a curriculum for the teaching of media literacy in Greek primary schools.

Impact could be brought about through a series of outputs. It is anticipated that the results of the study will be disseminated to interested parties through publications, seminars and in-service training workshops for Greek educators. Collaborations will also be established with academics and non-academics (NGOs, media literacy advocacy groups) for further making the case for primary media education and for developing high quality programmes for the delivery of media education, especially to vulnerable groups of young people such as refugees.

Acknowledgements

It is strange what twists life can take. As a Master's student, and a non-native speaker, arriving at the University of Manchester several years ago, I was kindly helped with my dissertation by one of my flatmates. The proofreading sessions led to a romance and few years later we became the proud parents of a lovely daughter, Rosie. Now it is Rosie that has helped me with the proofreading, and I would like to dedicate this thesis to her for her help and for her patience in having a part time father all these years.

Writing this thesis, has been a long and tough process: mentally, intellectually, physically and emotionally. I have been back and forth numerous times and I tested my limits on all levels. But what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. I have seen this experience as a valuable life journey into knowledge as much as into self-knowledge in more ways than one.

In this journey, I have been fortunate enough to have been helped by many people and in different ways that would be difficult to mention them all here. Most and foremost though, the credit goes to my main supervisor, Professor Andrew Burn. If someone wants to know what qualities make a person a truly human being, needs to look no further than to Andrew. His manners, tact, deep knowledge, empathy, communication skills, along with an incredible ability to make you feel worthy and capable when you yourself no longer believe in that, have helped me enormously to survive, particularly during the darkest moments, and make progress. I am ever so grateful for this life example Andrew!

The same goes for my second supervisor, Dr. Sara Hawley. Although Sara came onboard at a later stage in the PhD, her contribution has been instrumental. The invaluable comments she offered, with clarity, system

and always to the point, made it possible for me to see things from different perspectives and concentrate on the essentials, a skill that I'm often having difficulties with. And doing all that always with a smile. I couldn't have anticipated a better supervisory team.

I would like to also thank my dear friends and colleagues Sophia Diamantopoulou, Hara Sidiropoulou, Tzu-Bin Lin, Lefteris Klerides for the discussions and insightful comments. My parents for their constant encouragement and 'shelter' during my visits to Athens and my uncle Dr. Dionysios Voros for his moral support all along. My wonderful Noonie Minogue for her kindness and wit and the long discussions and music evenings we spent together. Meera Juncu and Erasmia Voukelatos for their kind suggestions with my English. My good old friend Yiannis Kostopoulos for his technical support. Last, but not least, my partner Spyridoula Rapanou for her immense and unconditional love and life coaching along the way.

I am greatly indebted to all of them for helping me in my efforts to try achieving what I always wanted most in my life.

Contents

Thesis Abstract.....	3
Impact statement.....	5
Acknowledgements.....	7
Table of figures	13
The structure of the thesis	16
Chapter 1 – Introduction.....	21
1.1 Preface - Rationale of the thesis.....	21
1.2 The Thesis' Conceptual Framework – Towards the Research Question	23
1.3 The Greek context.....	30
1.3.1 Educational system and developments impacting on media education in Greece	31
1.3.2 Media education in Greece	33
1.3.3 Concluding Remarks	40
1.4 An autobiographical note.....	42
1.5 Original contribution of the thesis.....	43
1.6 Summary	44
Chapter 2 - Literature Review.....	45
2.1 Introduction.....	45
2.2 The context of moving image literacy	50
2.2.1 Objectives and Conceptualizations of moving image literacy.....	50
2.3 Relevant empirical studies	56
2.4 Moving image literacy and identity.....	65
2.4.1 Discussion on moving image literacy and identity	80
2.5 Conclusion.....	84
Chapter 3 – Theory.....	85
3.1 Introduction - Towards a theoretical model	85
3.2 Theories of Media Literacy.....	86
3.3 The 'Language' of the Moving Image.....	90

3.3.1	<i>Introduction</i>	90
3.3.2	<i>Theories of moving image language</i>	92
3.4	From Concept to Practice: a Dialectic relationship	97
3.4.1	<i>Introduction</i>	97
3.4.2	<i>Spontaneous and scientific concepts</i>	98
3.4.3	<i>Metalinguage</i>	101
3.4.4	<i>The Concept/Practice Dialectic</i>	104
3.5	Representation of identity and culture	105
3.5.1	<i>Introduction</i>	105
3.5.2	<i>Theories of identity</i>	107
3.6	Conclusion	112
Chapter 4	– Methodology	114
4.1	Introduction	114
4.2	Methodological considerations	117
4.3	Research Design	118
4.4	The case study (context and implementation)	123
4.5	Methods of data collection and data collected	133
4.6	Data analysis	137
4.6.1	<i>Still images analysis</i>	137
4.6.2	<i>Analysis of the storyboards</i>	139
4.6.3	<i>Moving image analysis framework</i>	140
4.6.4	<i>Linguistic analysis of interviews and language used by children</i>	143
4.7	Ethical issues	145
4.8	Concluding thoughts on methodology	150
Chapter 5	- Data Analysis 1: Still Image	152
5.1	Introduction	152
5.2	Description of photography sessions	152
5.3	Analysis of the photographs	161
5.3.1	<i>General notes on the coding scheme</i>	161
5.3.2	<i>Media Language</i>	162

5.3.3	<i>Comparison of the 'before' and 'after' sets of photographs</i>	163
5.4	Sub-case studies of individual children	170
5.4.1	<i>Introduction to Sub-case Studies</i>	170
5.4.2	<i>Case Study 1: Giannis</i>	174
5.4.3	<i>Case Study 2: Renalnto</i>	191
5.4.4	<i>Case Study 3: Myrto</i>	214
5.5	Conclusion.....	244
5.5.1	<i>The Concept-Practice Dialectic</i>	245
5.5.2	<i>Dramatic Modes</i>	246
5.5.3	<i>Development</i>	247
Chapter 6	- Data Analysis 2: Video	251
6.1	The 'Before' video	252
6.2	Storyboard.....	254
6.2.1	<i>Concept formation</i>	257
6.2.2	<i>Modes of design and modes of production</i>	261
6.2.3	<i>From conceptual dissonance to a dialectic of concept and practice</i>	263
6.3	Analysis of the video.....	272
6.3.1	<i>First syntagm – opening sequence</i>	275
6.3.2	<i>Second syntagm – setting the scene</i>	281
6.3.3	<i>Third syntagm – building the tension</i>	292
6.3.4	<i>Fourth syntagm – the dramatic climax</i>	300
6.3.5	<i>Fifth syntagm – credits</i>	310
6.4	Discussion: Multimodal Design of the moving image.....	312
6.4.1	<i>Setting</i>	312
6.4.2	<i>Lighting</i>	313
6.4.3	<i>Dramatic action</i>	314
6.4.4	<i>Filming</i>	317
6.4.5	<i>Editing</i>	318
6.5	Conclusion: moving image making as Dialectical, Dramatic and Developmental	325

Chapter 7 - Answering the research questions / Conclusions	333
7.1 Research Question 1	333
7.2 Research Question 2	335
7.3 Research Question 3	338
7.4 The 3Ds Framework	340
7.5 Contribution to Knowledge	344
7.6 Statement of limitation	345
7.7 Next steps	348
References	350
Appendices.....	366
APPENDIX A - PHOTOGRAPHIC CODING SCHEMES	366
APPENDIX B - PHOTOGRAPHS NOT SHOWN IN THE THESIS TEXT.....	373
APPENDIX C - STORYBOARDS	395

Table of figures

- Figure 1.1: Filmic concept
- Figure 3.1: The 5As media literacy model
- Figure 4.1: Stages of the case study design
- Figure 5.1: View from Giannis' balcony
- Figure 5.2: Karate instructor and his students
- Figure 5.3: Motorcycle parked
- Figure 5.4: Painting in Giannis' home
- Figure 5.5: Giannis posing at the stadium
- Figure 5.6: A karate athlete
- Figure 5.7: The karate trophies
- Figure 5.8: Renalnto posing
- Figure 5.9: Renalnto posing
- Figure 5.10: Football game scene
- Figure 5.11: Football game scene
- Figure 5.12: Football game scene
- Figure 5.13: Football game scene
- Figure 5.14: A boy stealing medlars
- Figure 5.15: Renalnto's friends posing
- Figure 5.16: Renalnto's friends posing
- Figure 5.17: Renalnto's friends posing
- Figure 5.18: Renalnto's friends
- Figure 5.19: Renalnto's younger brother
- Figure 5.20: The school's boys volleyball team
- Figure 5.21: Football players posing
- Figure 5.22: Myrto posing in school
- Figure 5.23: Myrto posing in school
- Figure 5.20: The school's boys volleyball team
- Figure 5.24: Hara, Myrto's sister
- Figure 5.25: Vase with flowers at Myrto's home
- Figure 5.26: Anna posing with football shirt

Figure 6.1: Use of vectors: Arrow indicating barmaid's hand about to pick up the glass and serve the customer

Figure 6.2: Use of vectors: Arrow indicating customer entering the bar and sitting down

Figure 6.3: Use of curved lines to indicate movement (dancing belly dance)

Figure 6.4: Use of arrows to indicate persons and objects

Figure 6.5: Drawing circles around objects to indicate prominence

Figure 6.6: Opening shot and background of 'Milo Bar'

Figure 6.7: Barmaids discussing the day's schedule for the bar

Figure 6.8: First customer (Vaggelis) enters the bar

Figure 6.9: Customer (Vaggelis) orders his first drink

Figure 6.10: Customer (Vaggelis) asks for a second drink

Figure 6.11: Two more customers enter the bar

Figure 6.12: Customer (Vaggelis) getting drunk and passing out

Figure 6.13: Barmaid (Anna) escorting customer (Vaggelis) out of the bar

Figure 6.14: Effect with caption reading 'Ten minutes later'

Figure 6.15: Barmaids resume preparations around bar

Figure 6.16: Barmaid (Anna) preparing drinks for new customers

Figure 6.17: Barmaid (Anna) serving the new customers

Figure 6.18: Barmaid (Anna) exiting for bar errand

Figure 6.19: Special effect reading 'Ten minutes later' with potential thief's head appearing at the door of the bar

Figure 6.20: Special effect reading 'Two minutes later' with the thief's legs approaching

Figure 6.21: Thief (Aris) threatening barmaid (Myrto)

Figure 6.22: The customers putting their hands up

Figure 6.23: Barmaid (Myrto) disarming thief (Aris)

Figure 6.24: Policewoman (Hara) targeting thief

Figure 6.25: Policewoman (Hara) arresting thief (Aris)

Figure 6.26: Barmaid (Myrto) sighing with relief and crossing herself

Figure 6.27: Barmaid (Myrto) collapsing on the bar table

Figure 6.28: Video credits are scrolling down

Figure 6.29: Blank screen with music playing on the background

A democratic civilization will save itself only if it makes the language of the image into a stimulus for critical reflection, not an invitation to hypnosis.

Umberto Eco

(*'The Public Voice in a Democracy at Risk'*, (1 January 1998), p. 75)

The structure of the thesis

This thesis is organised into the following chapters: this summary replicates the opening paragraph for each chapter.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

In this chapter, I provide the rationale for the study, and I outline the research questions that underpin it. The central research question that underpins this thesis has been formulated as follows:

How do upper primary school children in Greece learn and use a particular aspect of media literacy, that of moving image media language?

After explaining my personal background and the reasons for conducting this research, I outline the parameters of the Greek education system and then focus on the development of media education in Greek schools. In so doing I give a background context against which my study took place.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

The literature review is outlining the relevant literature on the subject of teaching and learning moving image language in primary education. The aim here is to show how my research questions emerge from the relevant literature, how they link with the theory, and where my research is located in relation to the field's main issues.

Through mapping out the development of the subject, I have identified - in the academic literature as well as in accounts on practice - a number of approaches in relation to teaching and learning moving image language. Although there are clearly areas of agreement and consent among these approaches, other areas (such as specific pedagogies) remain problematic as the field is relatively new and not much empirical research has been conducted in the area of teaching and learning media education in

primary school. Therefore, there are still gaps in the way we understand how children develop media literacy and the exact nature of it. After these gaps have been identified in this chapter, I move on to investigate them further in the subsequent chapters through my empirical project.

Chapter 3 - Theory

For the purpose of addressing the research questions outlined in Chapter 1, I have identified a number of theories that can potentially shed light to the pertinent issues and in this chapter, I outline the theoretical framework I employ in the thesis.

Since the themes of the thesis revolve around the issues of media literacy, learning and childhood identity, I have drawn accordingly from respective theories; and while these relate to different segments of the data and are employed at different stages of the research, they ultimately inform productively and interrelate with each other, as it will be shown by the end of the chapter.

Regarding the learning theories, I draw mostly from Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, with emphasis on his ideas on concept development. This theory has also formed the basis of my own teaching practice during the project described in this thesis.

With regard to media literacy, I discuss theories of media literacy from a variety of perspectives, and I identify those theories that are most suitable for my analysis. In particular, after discussing the 'key concepts' framework of media literacy, I explore the '3Cs' framework which views media literacy as consisting of critical, cultural and creative elements.

There is also a further acknowledgment in relation to media literacy, that this is not just a semiotic-linguistic process, it is also a social one. When manipulating the meaning-making resources involved in media, not only do children make statements about themselves as individuals and about

their relationships with the world around them; they also perform aspects of their identity in particular ways. To explain that process, I draw on theories about identity mainly from E. Goffman.

Goffman uses the metaphor of the theatre in order to elaborate on his "dramaturgical approach" to human social interaction: people attempt to create impressions on other people that will allow them to achieve their goals. In this way he links identity with performance, the idea of drama as role playing in everyday life, which again seems to be particularly applicable to my project which involved a strong performative aspect. In his dramaturgical theory, Goffman suggests furthermore that a person's identity is not a stable and independent psychological entity, but rather, it is constantly remade as the person interacts with others.

Chapter 4 – Methodology: The design of the study and methods of analysis

In this chapter I outline the hybrid methodology that I have decided upon and followed in this thesis. Based on this model and in order to begin to develop some insights on the issue of teaching and learning media language, I set up an interventionist project where I devised and delivered a mini-curriculum for the teaching of moving image language.

I have made an initial assumption which states that it might be more productive to embark on the teaching of the moving image language by leaving out the diachronic element, the movement, both in front and of the camera itself, and instead to start with the teaching of filmic concepts through still photographs as a precursor to the teaching of moving image. As part of the project, the children were asked to create a series of media productions in stills first and then in video. Since the main aim was to determine the impact of my intervention on the learning of media language, the design required the children to work with each medium

twice: for each medium there was a 'before' and an 'after' production in between which my intervention, the teaching element, was placed. This design is central to the methodology employed.

The instruments for collecting data were video and audio recordings of the lessons, the products of the practical media activities the children were involved with, interviews with them, as well as collecting other kinds of written work they produced. The analytical methods I have chosen to adopt include specific linguistic features drawn from Halliday's (1989, 1994) functional grammar as well as elements from visual semiotics, multimodal theory and kineikonic theory (Burn, 2013; Burn & Parker, 2001a; Burn & Parker, 2001b).

Chapter 5 - Analysis Chapter 1: Framing and composition in still image

In this chapter I focus on the activities around framing and composition in still image which the children undertook as part of the project.

Following my argument of starting with still image first, I begin here with photography-related activities. I examine the 'before' and 'after' sets of photographs taken by three of the students in order to draw comparisons between the two sets of photos and amongst the three students. This comparison allows me to trace any changes resulting from the application of my intervention. Applying the theoretical framework outlined in the previous chapter, I offer explanations as to why particular children took particular photos of particular people, objects and situations, what they learnt in terms of media language as well as the general shape media literacy took for them.

Chapter 6 - Analysis Chapter 2: Framing and composition in moving image

This chapter focuses on the framing and composition activities related to moving image. Similar to the process used with stills and described above, there was a 'before' and an 'after' stage here too with my teaching intervention placed in between. Here, I trace the extent to which the transfer of knowledge between framing in stills and framing in moving image - as envisaged in my assumption - actually materialises. As part of this process, I examine the 'before' video produced, the storyboard the children were asked to produce for their video as part of the teaching, and finally the 'after' video.

Throughout the chapter - as has been the case with the previous one - two elements are mainly being considered. Firstly, the acquisition of the specific moving image metalanguage by the students. For that purpose, I make use of Vygotsky's and Halliday's theories. Secondly, the identity aspect which concerns the representations exhibited in the video as well as the motivations and personal investments as they emerge from the production. Here, identity theory based on Goffman's ideas is applied.

Chapter 7 - Discussion and Conclusions

Data is discussed and a number of conclusions are outlined in this chapter, drawn from the analysis and in response to the specific research questions posed. The 3Ds framework is proposed and explicated.

Finally, limitations of the study are acknowledged, implications for the Greek educational system are drawn and recommendations for further research are made.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Preface - Rationale of the thesis

In this chapter, I provide the rationale for the study and I outline the research questions that underpin it. The central research question that underpins this thesis has been formulated as follows:

How do upper primary school children in Greece learn and use a particular aspect of media literacy, that of moving image media language.

After explaining my personal background and the reasons for conducting this research, I outline the parameters of the Greek education system and then focus on the development of media education in Greek schools. In so doing I give a background context against which my study took place.

As I write these lines, I am having thoughts and feelings that I have experienced many times before. Observing children being fascinated and engrossed as they watch a film or a television program - as I have often done while teaching various classes - always reminds me (not without a smile...) of my own fascination with the moving image when I was their age and indeed a lot younger, for as long as I can remember myself. Among the many aspects that fascinated me, what I most vividly recall is the very workings of the film: 'how do they do that', 'how did they move from one place to the other', 'what happened in between', 'where does the music (and the canned laughter!) come from'? These and other similar questions often cropped up in my head after having watched a film or a television programme.

It was the same excitement, coming from my young students, that I encountered years later as a primary teacher and a media educator in Greece setting up media education projects and filmmaking activities. Although the fascination with the moving image is multilayered and takes

different forms, time and again the children would raise similar issues in their conversations regarding their viewing experiences and ask similar questions to the ones I had myself as a child: essentially about the workings of the camera, the shots, angles, music and editing. Interestingly – though not surprisingly – Bazalgette (2022) in her research has observed similar responses coming from even younger children whilst learning to understand screen media. Gradually, I began wanting to know more about how children make sense of what they watch and how the elements that constitute the moving image texts can be taught and learnt.

As I was getting more involved with media education, I realised that other colleagues who were working with the media in their classrooms were grappling with similar issues too and were looking for creative methods to teach and make children learn the basic elements of filmic language. As I will further explain later in this chapter, this is happening in an educational system (Greece) where media education is not featuring in the curriculum and those educators interested in working with media in schools are offered very little support.

Yet, what on one level may seem like naïve pondering on behalf of the children, at the same time rests at the heart of media education as it concerns our understanding of how children make sense of the media. ‘Media language’ - for that is what this refers to - is one of the key areas that media education concerns itself with and as the Literature Review chapter that follows shows, there is still a lack of understanding about the specificities of how primary school children learn this aspect of media. The field of media education needs therefore to have a clearer theorisation of how this is happening: indeed, as Buckingham (2003) also asserts, prior to designing media education curricula and programs of study, it is essential that we know what children know about media language, what they are able to do with it in an untutored manner - to begin with - and

how they can learn it after. It is therefore my belief that there is plenty of scope for such a study in order to further our understanding of this aspect of media education and I have undertaken this research with this aim in mind. The thesis has grown thus out of my interest to try and understand how some of the fundamental elements of moving image language can be learnt in primary school.

To investigate the issues surrounding media language learning and contribute to their understanding, I embarked on a project of empirical inquiry which was designed and delivered by myself as a qualitative piece of classroom research for the writing of my PhD thesis. This involved getting access to a primary school in Greece where I devised and taught a 'mini curriculum' on moving image language as part of an after-school club. The project lasted four months and took place in a large primary school on a large Greek island with a mixed group of six primary school students in Year 5.

1.2 The Thesis' Conceptual Framework – Towards the Research Question

This study inscribes itself within the field of media education which is defined as 'the process of teaching and learning about the media' (Buckingham, 2003, p. 4). The outcome of media education, the result of the teaching and learning about the media, is thought to be 'media literacy', a particular set of competences, skills and knowledge people acquire through media education and which are required in order to understand and use media (Buckingham, 2003). Although several models and conceptualisations of media literacy have been proposed (and some of them will be considered in the following chapters), a comprehensive and 'pragmatic' (McDougall and Ward, 2017:2) definition put forward by the UK media regulator OFCOM summarises the media literacy competences as the ability to 'access, understand and create

communications in a variety of contexts' (OFCOM, 2004) – although it must be noted that despite its remit on media literacy, OFCOM has left the term largely undefined (Wallis & Buckingham, 2019).

Of the many approaches attempting to specify more precisely the elements that constitute media literacy and the areas one should demonstrate competence in, the model suggested by BFI in the seminal publication 'Primary Media Education: A Curriculum Statement' (Bazalgette, 1989) has been quite influential and has been adopted by many commentators and practitioners in the field. This is a conceptual framework which identifies six 'key areas' or domains of understanding about the media: agencies, categories, technologies, languages, audiences and representations. The focus of my thesis lies precisely with the 'language' aspect of media literacy and specifically with the language of the moving image media (particularly video, television and film).

At this point, it is important to stress that I locate my research within moving image literacy which I view as being a particular subset of media literacy and one that entails a number of specificities: it is semiotically, culturally and technologically distinctive and it involves creative production (Leach & Burn, 2004).

According to the conceptual model of media literacy mentioned above, media language refers to the ways in which meanings are created in media texts. The definition of 'language' – as well as that of 'moving image language' – that I will be employing in this thesis is two faceted, with both aspects (as well as their development, use and how one affects the other in the teaching and learning process) forming part of my inquiry.

Firstly, media language is conceived of as a 'visual language' (see Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). This comprises the semiotic resources used in the design of media texts. In the case of moving image, these resources refer

to the filming and the 'techniques' (essentially rules) employed by camera work – broadly coming under what is known as composition and framing – and to editing which are used to communicate the intended meaning. The conception of filmic language in the above sense can also be thought to be comprised of a series of 'codes and conventions'.

Composition refers to the arrangement and placement of people and objects within a frame whereas framing refers to the different types of camera shots and camera movements used to capture such arrangements. The selection and juxtaposition of captured shots into a 'meaningful' sequence (with the possible addition of other elements such as sounds, music and effects) is editing.

As part of this thesis then, I will be taking a broader view of the moving image language as potentially being comprised of a range of additional dimensions which would include spoken language, mise-en-scene, gesture, posture, dress, music and performance. In this respect I will approach the moving image as multimodal and consider the questions this raises for pedagogies with a narrower conception of the moving image.

The second conceptualisation of language I will be using in the thesis is language as 'metalanguage'. Metalanguage, as an initially linguistic term in general, is defined as a written or verbal language used to describe and classify another language; "literally, a language about language, or more commonly, a way of talking/writing/thinking about texts" (O'Sullivan et al., 1994: 179).

In the context of my research, metalanguage refers specifically to a specialized filmic vocabulary used by the 'experts' in the field (teachers, directors, critics etc.) - but ultimately by the students too - in order to describe the codes and conventions or else the 'language' of the moving image in the manner of semiotic resources or 'grammar' as defined above. As Buckingham (2003) points out "media literacy entails the

acquisition of a 'metalanguage' - defined as a means of describing the forms and different modes of communication" (p. 38), for example "in order to describe different types of camera angles or shot transitions" (p. 73).

In relation to the above conceptualisations of language, I aim initially to explore in the thesis what the children's existing media literacy in this domain is. Firstly, I want to know how children use the semiotic resources of media language in creating their own media productions; for example, how they choose and organise what elements will be placed in the frame and how they combine shots to tell a story. Secondly, and in relation to language as metalanguage, I intend to look at the reflexive understandings of the semiotic resources that the children develop (Connolly, 2008) - such as those described above - in constructing meaning and at the explicit descriptions of these resources' workings.

As I will discuss in Chapter 3, these metalinguistic terms correspond to related filmic concepts; in fact, the technical codes and conventions (semiotic resources) also refer to corresponding concepts: as such, each concept is formulated through one 'grammatical' technique/convention and talked about/described via one metalinguistic term (see Figure 1.1).

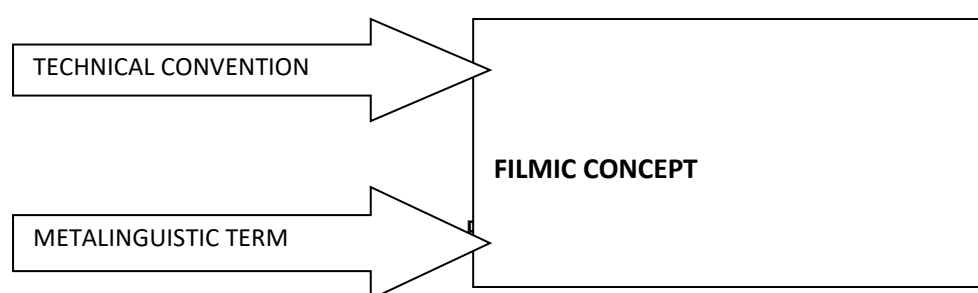


Figure 1.1: Filmic concept

Here then, I want to explore how understandings of moving image language concepts develop and how children use verbal language

(metalanguage) to talk about moving image texts prior to any formal instruction but also following that. In relation to this issue, Poole (2005) argues that although children have an extended expertise in the workings of screen-based media, they nevertheless lack the relevant vocabulary necessary to articulate those understandings. Following on from this claim, there is an issue as to whether learning that vocabulary - 'the metalanguage' - helps the children to consolidate their implicit understandings of the moving image language and improves their abilities in making media. Put simply, the question here is regarding the role of metalanguage in concept formation and this is one of the main concerns to be explored in the thesis.

The discussion above has focused on the semiotic dimension of media literacy: to be media literate, in the sense outlined above, involves the ability to read and write the language of media. True as that might be, it could imply a view of literacy as an individualistic process abstracted somehow from the social world, a view which Street (2003) terms 'the autonomous model of literacy'. The theory of literacy I employ here, drawn mainly from New Literacy Studies as outlined by Street (1984, 2003), proposes that literacy extends beyond any conventional ability to read and write; it is a social process and practice. Carrying this notion forward to media literacy, this implies that a social, rather than an instrumental approach will be taken here too: the latter would have been confined to the ability, for example, to operate a piece of equipment or understand a media text. Reading and writing are hence regarded as social activities, rather than a series of abstract rules of encoding and decoding signs. They develop along the way and in close relation to the process of creating meaning in particular social settings and for particular purposes. As such, literacy - and, by extension for our purposes, media literacy - is seen as a 'dynamic' process in the sense that Potter and MacDougall (2017) define.

Media literacy has therefore a socio-cultural element regarding the way people behave in relation to each other in social settings. In that sense, children's engagement with media involves aspects of personal and social identity investment. When making media, children employ the media to explore issues pertinent to their own subjectivities (Leach & Burn, 2004): they are implicitly representing what it means to be a child, what it means to be an adult and how they relate to the adult world, for instance. At the same time, they bring elements of their wider cultural and media experience into their productions. On this matter, Potter (2012a), for example, has eloquently shown how young learners' engagement with video production interacts with representations of their identities leading to new forms of literacy practices that he terms 'curatorship'.

In relation to this then, I want also to explore what elements of their experience, identity and culture children employ when using moving image language to construct their own media productions: what representations they make and how these reflect and relate to aspects of their social identity, particularly in terms of gender, ethnicity, social class and age.

At its heart, though, the thesis is concerned with learning and this is the unifying element that binds together the strands and issues that have been discussed so far. If the above research questions and points of investigation relate to the state of media literacy the children possess at any given time, the thesis is primarily concerned with the learning of media literacy, with how the children can advance their competencies and understandings and in fact with the development of a critical media literacy. In the words of Burn and Durran (2013):

If children ... can perfectly well learn to use such technologies informally, then education has nothing to add. If they can learn to use them functionally, but do not necessarily acquire a critical understanding of them, then education can offer to develop this (p. 274).

As such, I aim to investigate how children learn to use the semiotic resources of moving image media, how they use them in the making of their media productions and how they learn the verbal moving image metalanguage in order to talk about, analyse and critique media productions. I also examine what their responses have been in relation to the particular pedagogic strategies followed by the teacher–researcher aimed at the development of this critical aspect of media literacy - although it needs to be noted that focusing on the teaching aspect is not the main aim of this study.

in order to investigate this, I am making and then exploring the assumption that it might be more productive to isolate, initially, the moving element of the moving image and begin accessing the concepts of framing and composition through activities related to still image - the rationale for this choice will be further explicated in the methodology chapter. Secondly, I will explore the relationship between analysis and production as a form of learning the moving image language. Over the history of media education, there has been a polarization between the two approaches regarding the teaching and learning of media which has often resulted in the privileging of theory over practice (see Masterman, 1985). More recent research (Buckingham, 2014; Burn & Durran, 2013; Burn, Potter & Reid, 2014; Connolly and Readman, 2017), however, suggests that a more productive position might be the integration of analysis and production in ways that inform and involve each other. I will be taking this as my starting pedagogic approach but I need to state at this point that although I acknowledge that pedagogy involves both teaching and learning, for the purposes of this thesis my focus is primarily on learning. This is prioritised not just for the purpose of time management but primarily because it has been identified in the literature review as the area which requires more extensive research. I will then be exploring how students can learn the moving image language through a pedagogy that

involves a close and dynamic interplay between analysis, production and reflection.

Bringing together the three axes I have discussed above, leads to three corresponding and interrelated research questions:

- 1. What forms does media literacy take for the young learners in relation to their involvement with the moving image language? What do they know about it when they discuss it and what can they do with it?**
- 2. How does a dynamic model of analysis, production and reflection as a pedagogic approach work for the learning of moving image language and of the making with it?**
- 3. What is the social and identity aspect of this engagement? Where do the young learners draw their references from and what aspects of themselves, their backgrounds, interests and identities do they bring into and express through their media productions?**

These questions will be asked in relation to the specific Greek cultural and educational context and therefore - for purposes of further clarity and brevity - the central research question that underpins this thesis can be formulated as follows:

How do upper primary school children in Greece learn and use a particular aspect of moving image media literacy, that of moving image language?

1.3 The Greek context

As has already been indicated, my study is located within the primary school sector in Greece. In the following sections, therefore, I aim to provide some background in order to facilitate navigation and understanding of the context of my work. I will do that by accounting first for the wider educational and national background against which the study was conducted. I will then proceed to outline the recent history as well as the current state of media education within the Greek educational system and locate my research within it.

1.3.1 Educational system and developments impacting on media education in Greece

Several initiatives currently present and operating in the Greek educational ecosystem have been realised – with varying degrees of penetration and success – over the last few years which can potentially serve as location spaces for the implementation of media education since the subject does not feature officially on school curriculums at any level. Since 1997, the ‘all-day primary school’ initiative has been in place. Initially, this expanded school schedule (operating between 1.30 and 4.00 pm - and following its latest review running until 5.30 pm, as of September 2022) lacked a specific curriculum. As such, it operated as a kind of ‘laboratory’ where teachers had the freedom to experiment. Some media education projects did take place during that time. My project was carried out within this all-day school framework, during the hour of ‘drama and cultural activities’.

Starting in the school year 2002-3, a new national curriculum, replacing a decades-old one, was introduced entitled ‘Cross Thematic Curriculum Framework’ (Greek Pedagogical Institute, 2002), with the main theme permeating its philosophy being that of the ‘inter-disciplinary approach to knowledge’. The cross thematic approach was practiced initially within the dedicated curriculum space of the ‘Flexible Zone of interdisciplinary and creative activities’. Flexible Zone took up to three hours per week in the

first to the fourth grade and two hours in the fifth and the sixth grade and encouraged pupils' experiential learning through cross-curricular activities and projects. As previously with the all-day school, within the framework of the flexible zone teachers could develop and implement interdisciplinary projects related to various topics. As often happens with the arrival of a new government into power (in 2019 a conservative government replaced the previous one of a more centre left leaning persuasion), a new framework, called 'Skills Workshop' has replaced the 'Flexible Zone' one since the school year 2021-22, maintaining largely the same principles as its predecessor, although focusing more acutely into the still only vaguely described idea of 'skills'.

If all-day school proved to have been a place for the inclusion of new subjects in the school curriculum, the Flexible Zone has been primarily a site for new teaching approaches and methods. Despite their various shortcomings, I regard both initiatives - particularly the 'Skills Workshop' (the new incarnation of 'Flexible Zone') - as appropriate curriculum locations where media education could be embedded and developed in Greek primary schools, especially if we are talking about a nationwide expansion of the subject. Optimistic as this may sound, it comes with a caveat: any adoption and practice of media-related activities by willing teachers will be carried out entirely at their own drive. Despite its extensive list of numerous suggestions for 'workshops' and activities, the 'Skills Workshop' initiative constitutes another missing opportunity for media education. The subject's deafening absence from the suggested activities couldn't have been louder. As if that was not enough, the conservative government has just recently moved on to abolish the subject of Arts in secondary education and drastically reduce its teaching hours in the primary school.

1.3.2 Media education in Greece

Media education in Greece is a relatively new issue in comparison to other countries as it has only featured in the academic and public sphere debates for the last thirty years or so. At the same time, the fact that it still does not feature at any level in the official school curriculum is quite characteristic of the state of media education in the country. To be sure, most observations related to the state of media education in Greece, as I have described them in an earlier relevant publication (Lin, T. et al., 2008), are still valid, with commentators pointing to the continuing “institutional inertia of the education system” (Kourti & Androussou, 2013: 192) in relation to media education – the absence of media education in the new ‘Skills Workshop’ framework mentioned just above being such a case in point. These shortcomings have become more evident in the face of the recent upheaval caused by Covid 19 and have even constrained Greece’s response to the pandemic (Tzifopoulos, 2020).

Historically, the first and to this day the only organised and large-scale attempt to introduce media education in the Greek primary curriculum was ‘Melina project - Education and Culture’, a joint venture between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture. It ran in 92 schools between 1995 and 2003, in the form of in-service training. The programme’s aim was to teach the arts in schools and also teach through the arts. There were five areas of interest: music, drama, dance, plastic arts and mass media (which was actually called ‘audiovisual activities’) (Melina project, 2015). Teachers attended seminars in which they worked with sound and still images both in analytical and practical ways; in fact the latter element was even stronger. Moving image activities had not featured in the program by the time it ceased to exist as it was assumed that children had to start their way into media education through the medium of still photography. The program had embarked on developing a basic curriculum for the teaching of media in all classes of primary school and it also worked towards a developmental model. In contrast with the

prevailing stance at the time, the approach held towards the media was not defensive or protective. Instead, media were seen as a form of art and as an instrument allowing for communication and personal expression.

Through examining the documents (Melina project, 2015) and the workshop practices of the 'Melina project' (personal experience as a teacher trainer for two years), one can infer that despite the occasional mention of television and computer software, the preferred media was photography and film. Photography was seen as a precursor to learning effectively the elements of filmic language and to some extent this idea influenced the design of my project, an idea I will further elaborate on in the Methodology chapter, Chapter 4. In turn, learning the filmic language was thought to equip students to 'read' films more thoroughly and hence lead them to a greater appreciation of the film work. In that sense, certain analogies can be detected here with BFI's Moving Image model and especially with the idea of 'Cineliteracy' which is discussed in the following chapter. As a possible curriculum location, it was envisaged that the 'audiovisual expression' activities would be embedded mostly within the Arts subject.

In a later publication, Theodoridis (2008), head of 'Melina project's' audiovisual expression section, regarded the very task of acquainting young children with the language of media as being among the first ones (chronologically, but also in terms of importance) in media education. In his article, the 'Flexible Zone' (mentioned above) is seen as an opportunity and appropriate curriculum space for the subject's proliferation. Consideration is also given to the mother language subject (Greek) as a possible curriculum location for media education which had not been the case with 'Melina project' earlier.

Film festivals, as elsewhere, often tend to have an educational section that focuses on learning about films. Thessaloniki Film Festival, the most

prominent in the country, and Olympia Children's Film Festival, a festival with a specific interest in children's and young people's films with an orientation towards "the development of quality films aimed at children and young people in Greece" (Olympia Film Festival, 2016: n.p.), organise a series of workshops for children during the festival, usually lasting one week. During these workshops, video cameras are given to children who are then taught the basics of filmmaking. Newcomers such as the Chania Film Festival (established 2013) and Athens International Children's Film Festival (established 2018) are engaging in more widespread training activities for teachers (mostly online, necessitated by the current Covid 19 climate) and have produced teaching guides and educational materials. Their activities have been endorsed by the Ministry of Education.

Despite most of these initiatives claiming to promote learning about different kinds of films - see, for example, Thessaloniki Festival's aim of "developing programs which will promote media literacy in all its varieties" (Thessaloniki Film Festival, 2018: n.p.) - this is confined only to what could be termed as art films leaving aside the vast majority of films children usually watch that derive from popular culture. This stance seems to have similarities with a wider European tradition which is often informed by the assumption that film is a 'higher' cultural form compared to other media.

At the school level, within the 'Cross Thematic Curriculum Framework' (Greek Pedagogical Institute, 2002) mentioned above, a number of suggestions for examining aspects of the media can be traced. For example, there is a target for Year 6 students "to understand the basic parameters of the ways in which social and cultural conditions as well as the Mass Media affect and influence attitudes and models of identification and behaviour" (ibid.: n.p.). Here students can examine specific issues around the themes of "role models and habit formation from the mass

media (magazines, posters, radio, television): negative and positive influences, television education” (ibid.: n.p.).

In my view, these statements already evoke a very linear ‘cause-effect’ relationship which does not leave space for other interpretations of the media phenomenon whilst they emphasize what the media do to people rather than people’s active engagement and interpretation of media.

A similarly hostile stance towards the media can also be detected in the ‘Flexible Zone’ textbook. Part of an activity where students are asked to collect information about their viewing habits, poses to them questions such as: “are there moments where you feel like television is ‘bombarding’ you?” (YPEPTH, 2001a: 70, quotation marks in the original) and ‘can you think of different pursuits instead of watching television?’ (ibid.: 72). The ‘correct’ answers are already implied by the way the questions have been phrased. In the ‘Flexible Zone textbook for upper primary school children’ (YPEPTH, 2001b: 78), Vasilis Vasilikos, a well-known novelist, attempts a comparison between books and media where he clearly sees ‘image’ as a danger to literary culture pointing in a didactic manner to the superior value of books that echoes sentimental undertones of cautionary approaches prevalent in earlier periods.

On the academic and research level, Pashalidis (2000) outlines the key points of a proposal for the introduction of media education in the Greek schools which he embeds within the tradition of Cultural Studies. In that sense, this model is closely aligned with the approach the British Film Institute has adopted. Pointing to a different direction compared to the overall protectionist model adopted in the country, he sees media education as grounded on three main principles (ibid.: 119): an extended conceptualisation of the meaning of literacy which involves the visual mode of communication as well; the ‘making’ and creative aspect of media literacy as an essential feature; children’s experience as the starting point and acknowledgment of the children’s popular culture and

taste - although at times he is leaning towards a romanticization of the children's resistance towards the 'official' culture of the adults and the school. I believe that this proposal which also adopts a less grandiose pedagogy still remains a valid proposal and could form a sound basis for the teaching of media in Greece. Drawing on international experience and theoretical advancements on the subject, it offers an alternative route to the debate on media education in Greece which has often been characterised either by hostility to the subject of media education or a rather unclear stance about incorporating media without the aspect of criticality.

Similarly, developments and practices in language learning that have already been adopted elsewhere gain prevalence in the Greek context too. Characteristically, the new Greek language textbooks for the primary school have been written following largely the communicative language teaching principles. Wide acknowledgment is also given for the need for a multiliteracies approach in teaching which draws on the theoretical orientations outlined by the New London Group (2000). Invoking that, Hatzisavvidis (2005: 42) argues that "... the school should aim to bring the students in contact with other meaning-making sources, other than the linguistic one such as visual, oral, architectural etc". The examples cited from the teaching of mother tongue, though, include written text combined with pictures, drawings and diagrams; absent is the moving image.

Discussing the phases in the history of media education, Burn and Durrant (2008: 12), endorse Buckingham's argument of the three phases of this history:

Buckingham's argument is that all three of these phases involve certain kinds of defensiveness against mass culture; and furthermore that the history of media education internationally is notable for - indeed, often begins from - defensive attitudes towards the media, which he sees as falling into three types:

cultural defensiveness, moral defensiveness, and political defensiveness.

Greek media education seems to be consistent with the above assertion. Against this backdrop, there have been some more recent developments, nevertheless, that provide encouraging signs for a different direction. Even though the Ministry of Education, responsible for nationwide implementation of new curricula, is still not moving fast enough towards that target, other players have stepped in, filling the void. Despite their various shortcomings, they are making an effort to create a concrete approach and offer guidance for those enthusiastic educators who would be interested in pursuing media education activities.

At policy level, a significant development has been the launch of the National Centre of Audiovisual Media and Communication (EKOME) in 2017, a quango advising the Ministry of Digital Governance on media policy matters “with a mission to foster and promote public and private initiatives, foreign and domestic, in all sectors of the audiovisual industry” (EKOME, 2021, n.p.). EKOME replaced former Hellenic Audiovisual Institute (IOM), which was abolished in 2011, due to public spending cuts, amidst the great financial crisis. It takes a strong interest in media education although this is not part of its official remit. As part of that interest, they participate in media education projects with foreign partners and produce and translate teaching guides. EKOME is also the national agent for the UNESCO-inspired GAPMIL initiative and as such it largely subscribes to the Media and Information (MIL) framework which EKOME (2021: n.p.) views as comprised of “a set of social and technical competences that foster a strong information-sharing society”.

On that note, EKOME launched a partnership with UNESCO and the educational network of GAPMIL-Global Alliance for Partnerships in Media and Information Literacy in 2018. The partnership involves the coordination of GAPMIL European Sub-Chapter Mediterranean Group by

EKOME, with the aim to promote MIL skills as a basic component for the 21st century citizen in Southern Europe.

This focus on the Mediterranean aligns on many levels with the focus of this study which views Greece as placed in the European South, occupying, that is, a semi-peripheral position in the global circuits of culture (Jorge, 2015), as well as the debates around the research needed in this part of the world (Scott & Marsh, 2018) and thus addresses the media landscape prevalent in the region as well as the specific media habits and 'needs' of the children involved in my study. I will return to this issue in the final Conclusions chapter 7.

On a more practical level, KARPOS Centre for Education and Intercultural Communication, set up by former members of the 'Melina project' several years ago, has been very active in the field and has won a reputation as a serious, reliable and authoritative voice. Much emphasis is given to training teachers and to working with children, particularly immigrants, and to collaborating in European media education projects. KARPOS's latest activity has been the publication in English of a 'loose' (their term) Curriculum for Audiovisual Education (KARPOS, 2019) and the accompanying Teacher's Guide (KARPOS, 2020). As they state: "this is the result of an effort to propose a structured method of teaching Audio Visual concepts in the context of National Education" (KARPOS, 2020: n.p.).

As with many similar attempts in the country, these accounts are not researched. They have derived, nevertheless, from a long engagement and experience on the subject, review of relevant bibliography and international (particularly UK) good practice and application in multifarious educational settings. My work in this thesis builds on the principles outlined in these accounts and aims to see how they can work in the classroom practice.

1.3.3 Concluding Remarks

In this section, I have attempted to outline the parameters of the media education landscape in Greece in order to explain the ways in which my research is located within these parameters. I will end with a number of considerations drawn from the points raised above.

Reporting for UNESCO on media education globally, Domaille and Buckingham (2001) have found that there has been a shift worldwide from 'inoculation' to 'empowerment' approaches. I would claim that having examined the various discourses embedded in the initiatives outlined above - as much as the material available has made it possible - it emerges that this move has not been settled in Greece as yet. At best, there is an ambivalence regarding the aims of media education: calls for protection still prevail whereas voices for critical awareness struggle to be heard. Comparing this ambivalence though to the views of total condemnation and rejection that dominated until recently, I would take this to be a positive sign. In any case, what the UNESCO report observes in relation to this point seems to be true in the case of Greece: "Generally speaking, countries with a less well-established tradition of media education still seem to be informed by a perceived need to 'protect' young people from the media" (Domaille and Buckingham, 2001: 13).

To summarise, the situation in relation to media education in Greece is fragmented and its direction unclear – although the current educational framework provides some potential curricular opportunities for media-related work, albeit not explicitly. This leaves it to the teachers to explore how to integrate media education in their classrooms, what kind of work to do with that, for what purposes and through what strategies. To facilitate this there is a need now to become more specific on media

pedagogies and indeed on moving image pedagogies, an aim my study seeks to address within the context of the Greek educational system.

Moving the case of media education in Greece forward, therefore, calls for twofold action, in my opinion. Firstly, there is a need to conduct research on media education aspects in the Greek educational context; so far there has been very little such research. Secondly, it would also be productive to look elsewhere, on a macro level, for good practice and models which could be 'transferred' to the local context, always taking into account the specificities and priorities of the Greek education system.

In relation to the first matter, as already mentioned, the current study aims to contribute to that objective. In fact, it is encouraging that such research has begun to appear. Arnaouti (2014) examined in her doctoral thesis the cultural and creative function of moving image literacy in the subject of English in the Greek secondary school. A follow-up article (Arnaouti, 2017) presents a case study realised in a Greek model high school as an extracurricular animation-making project during an after-school club. The aim of this research was to encourage teachers to use moving image literacy as a means of affective involvement of their students with the subject taught. My own study has different foci as it is located in the primary sector, it is concerned with the teaching and particularly the learning of the moving image, and it is interested predominantly in the critical function of media literacy. Despite these differences, it complements Arnaouti's research: taken together, these studies provide a more comprehensive picture of the state and possibilities of media education in Greece than hitherto.

In relation to the second matter, my study looks more broadly at instances of good practice internationally and draws from them with the aim of examining how these practices could be applied to the Greek context and what insights we can draw from such application. As noted above, this 'transfer' needs to be done in line with the country's own

educational, cultural and political priorities. On this matter, Hobbs claims that 'each nation's approach to digital and media literacy education must be positioned in relation to its own educational institutions and media systems' (cited in Hartai, 2014). I have argued elsewhere (Voros, 2015) on what the specific priorities could be for Greece in the case of a possible introduction of a media education curriculum and I will revisit this issue in the Conclusion Chapter 7.

1.4 An autobiographical note

My personal involvement with the mass media dates back to my high school years as an avid cinemagoer and an aspiring film director. During my university years as a trainee teacher (and active member of the University's film club organising screenings and discussing films) I developed an interest in how to combine pedagogy and media. My M.Ed. studies in Education and the Mass Media at the University of Manchester that followed, provided me with the theoretical and practical knowledge to start working with the media with my students during my lessons once appointed as primary school teacher. After working as a primary school teacher for a number of years – where I carried out media projects in my schools and formed teacher groups with an interest in media education - I was seconded to the Educational Television's department of the Greek Ministry of Education for a period of four years. Although not directly related with the aims of media education, working at the Educational Television where I supervised projects and oversaw the filming and the editing of the commissioned programs, I developed a better understanding of filmic language. It was there that I became involved with a Ministry of Education project which aimed at introducing the Arts - among them media (education) as an art form - into primary school (the 'Melina project' described above). I was employed as a teacher trainer on media education activities and from that position I had the opportunity to

follow the evolvement of the subject into the Greek school system right from the beginning.

Recently, the debate has resurfaced, and a number of stakeholders have put forward proposals and arguments for the teaching of media in schools. In this light, it has become apparent that soon there will be need for more specialized knowledge on the subject, which will have to take into account the particularities of the Greek education system. I see my research as being inscribed within this context too and serving that purpose – although it has to be noted that neither is my focus on educational policy nor can my findings claim generalizability. Specifically, one of the implications of my work will be to contribute to the development of a curriculum for the moving image media literacy in Greek primary schools.

1.5 Original contribution of the thesis

The thesis is aspiring to contribute to the field of media education in several ways:

1. To the furthering of the understanding of how moving image-related concepts can be learned in primary school, through investigating an account that looks closely at that process and explains how this can be conceived as a dialectical and developmental cycle between concept and practice. For that purpose, a framework is being developed in the thesis to account for those processes.
2. To doing the above in the specificities of the Greek educational and cultural context, furthering the case of media education in the country – even in a limited way, as it is acknowledged that it is only one aspect of media education being investigated here.

3. To inform interested teachers and media educators who would wish to follow a similar pedagogic strategy in teaching media language in seeing what the 'learning outcomes' of this approach can be.

4. The findings of this research could also be of interest to those designing educational policy in Greece, particularly in the drafting of a media education curriculum. The research takes the form of offering researched and evidence-based recommendations that policy-makers can draw on reliably in the design of such a curriculum in the future.

1.6 Summary

In this chapter, I formulated the research questions that will guide the investigation that will follow, I positioned myself and my work within the field of media education and I described the Greek educational context within which my research is located. In the next chapter of Literature Review I will examine theoretical and practical accounts that touch upon the three main themes identified in my research questions with particular focus on the learning of the moving image language in primary school.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The central research question that underpins this thesis is concerned with how upper primary school children in Greece learn and make use of an aspect of media literacy, that of moving image media language.

The preceding Introduction chapter dealt with a number of issues: it defined my area of interest; it specified the research questions; it outlined the development and the current state of media education in Greece in order to provide the background of the study and place it in the relevant national and educational context.

In the present chapter, I am reviewing literature pertinent to the themes of the research questions, as outlined in Chapter 1, and the issues posed by them. The aim here is to show how my research questions emerged from the relevant literature, how they link with the theory, and where my research is located in relation to the field's main issues. Through mapping out the development of the subject, I have identified - in the academic literature as well as in accounts of practice - a number of approaches in relation to teaching and learning of moving image language. Although there are clearly areas of agreement and consent among these approaches, other areas - such as specific pedagogies - remain problematic as the field is relatively new and not much empirical research has been conducted in the area of teaching and learning media literacy in primary school. Therefore, there are still gaps in the way we understand how children develop moving image media literacy and the exact nature of it. After these gaps have been identified in this chapter, I move on to investigate them further in the subsequent chapters through my empirical project.

The aim of examining the literature is to gain a more thorough understanding of the debates and the issues in the field and locate my

research in relation to them, to critically evaluate influential accounts, and to identify possible gaps in our current knowledge of moving image learning which need to be investigated further. The outcomes of the literature review will also inform the development of apt theoretical and methodological frameworks for the research and its related foci.

Initially, some elucidations need to be made in relation to the kinds of literature that has been examined. In doing so, the boundaries of the focus of the research are also being more precisely delineated.

The main focus of this research is on the learning of the moving image language. Learning is, nevertheless, inextricably intertwined with teaching. Therefore, literature that deals with the teaching of the moving image language (and the teaching of moving image literacy more generally, as necessary) is also being reviewed. In this way, the learning responses and the mechanisms the students employ in relation to the teaching they receive will become more apparent. In connection to this, I should point out that I am reviewing literature related both to theoretical accounts that suggest models of teaching and learning the media, as well as to empirical research looking at how the moving image has been taught, learned and practised by young people in classrooms and in specific projects.

As stated in the title of the thesis, the educational location for the research is the primary school. As Buckingham (2019: 104) notes, “there is still very little media education happening in UK primary schools, although there have been some interesting initiatives there”. At the same time, a substantial part of the research and literature in the field has originated from the secondary education sector where the study of media - in the form of the subject of Media Studies, for example - has been more firmly established. That said, even though most of the literature on media literacy focuses on older children, “there is no reason why [secondary accounts] should not be adapted for younger children as well”

(Buckingham, 2019: 76). Subsequently, influential secondary media education accounts have been reviewed with the aim of serving as initial models and thinking how these can be built on and adapted for the primary school in productive ways – taking always into account the particularities of the sector.

The institutional location of this research is indeed the school, as an official provider of formal education. This location has been favoured for several reasons, not least with the consideration in mind that a desired nationwide application of media education is more likely to reach a greater number of students and subsequently succeeding if embedded within the curriculum spaces of compulsory schooling. However, in discussions about school, the experiences students have in and of it are often contrasted with those acquired from out-of-school environments, in what Marsh (2007: 212) describes as the “increasingly divergent movement of the tectonic plates of home and school”. In particular, there is an acknowledgment that most young people’s experiences derive from spaces such as home and leisure. A substantial part of that experience comes about from exposure and active engagement with media and popular culture. Following this recognition, a productive line of research has emerged from studying the relations between children and media in informal spaces (see Potter & McDougall, 2017; Scott, & Marsh, 2018). The literacies that are present in out-of-school spaces and the pedagogies that are developed are valuable as they can also productively inform how media can be learnt in school. Studies of such nature will be considered for this reason, although, clearly, the institutional conditions, the processes of learning, as well as the power relations are markedly different in out-of-school engagements with media (Kress, 2010) and these limitations will be taken into account.

The practical activities and the productions students got involved in for the projects reported in this thesis, were carried out for its most part in

the digital format. Yet, the focus of the thesis is on the learning of the *concepts* of moving image language, and this is regardless of the medium or technology they may be delivered through. Hence, in the literature review that follows, I have also considered research on moving image carried out in media forms and formats such as film, television and analogue video. After all, “‘new media’ does not change the essence of what media literacy is, nor does it affect its ongoing importance in society” (Jolls and Wilson, 2014: 68). The choice for considering such literature implies certain recognitions that have been made which are important for the thesis. The first affirms the continuance of the features and principles of moving image language across formats. Indeed, Buckingham (2019: 87) asserts that there are “considerable continuities between old and new media” and that in reality, beyond and above formats, “what we study are forms of representation and communication that are socially organised and distributed” (ibid.: 78). Hence, even with digital technology, although the means and devices may be different, the social arrangements and practices remain to a large extent the same. The second recognition posits that earlier developments in theoretical conceptualizations of the moving image as well as of its teaching and learning could also be productively adapted and applied to the newer digital forms of media production and communication.

The above statements ought not to be regarded as belittling the significance of the digital technology; on the contrary: the thesis acknowledges the prevalence of the digital in the current communicative and educational landscape, its impact, and its affordances, beyond being simply a ‘new delivery format’. To be sure, the digital changes the pedagogic relations in profound ways and by further democratizing access to media, it places them at the centre of young people’s leisure activities. Hence, although some attention will also be given to earlier formats for the reasons explained above, the main emphasis remains on the digital.

The media has also been discussed in connection to traditional print literacy. The interrelations between the two fields (especially with the language subject) are multi-faceted and well-documented (see Burn 2010; Goodwyn, 2005; Robinson, 2000). Many studies have indeed demonstrated how digital technologies can promote the development of print literacy skills such as audience awareness (Lewis & Fabos, 2005), argumentation (Beach & Doerr-Stevens, 2009), and comprehension (Coiro & Dobler, 2007). Another such significant connection is manifested in the use of media texts and popular culture as objects for increasing attainment and as motivational material for students towards traditional literacy. Examples include the work of Bulman (2017) which focuses on the use of film as a stimulus to improve standards and motivation in writing and that of Rwodzi, De Jager and Mpofu (2020) that uses social media for encouraging the teaching of English as a second language.

In order to explore the above issues, this chapter has been organised into the following three sections.

The literature review begins with identifying what moving image media literacy consists of for young people, as well as the aims for doing moving image literacy (section 2.2). The focus here is on wider conceptualisations of children and moving image literacy.

Section 2.3 looks at empirical studies examining how children learn the moving image language. The section also considers what the literature says about what the children already know (and don't know) and can do at this age in relation to the moving image.

In section 2.4 I am reviewing literature which investigates the relationships between moving image literacy and identity. The aim is to explicate how the young learners use resources (and which resources specifically) to express their identities and (re)present themselves in complex ways that relate to their own contexts and interests. In this way,

I am examining the kinds of identities they claim for themselves when engaging in media-making activities.

Finally, in section 2.5, conclusions from the above debates are drawn together, possible gaps in the accounts are identified and connections are being made with the subsequent theory, methodology and analysis chapters.

2.2 The context of moving image literacy

A more extended discussion on media literacy and moving image literacy theories, as key lenses through which my research data will be examined, will be presented in the Theory Chapter. The current section deals with literature concerning the background and brief history of the subject and with how moving image literacy has been conceived – with specific reference to the primary school, whenever possible. As such, it discusses the conceptions of moving image literacy and moving image language as proposed by various theorists of media education.

2.2.1 Objectives and Conceptualizations of moving image literacy

The moving image has existed since the 1890s. Initially delivered through analogue technology (film and later television), the advent of digital technology, with its ease of use and the many affordances it entails, has made the moving image more prevalent and ‘visible’ in people’s life.

Teaching about the moving image emerged following its inception—although, understandably, with divergent aims and purposes throughout the different times. To a large extent, ideas about moving image education follow on from and often overlap with the broader media education ‘paradigms’ of their respective eras. As such, and given the relative scarcity of specific studies on moving image language for the primary level, as already reported (Bazalgette, 2009; Parry, 2013; Marsh

and Bearne, 2008), I am considering literature and research from the wider field of media literacy in order to draw conclusions and parallels for the moving image literacy. Indeed, as Bazalgette (2009: 6) asserts "The widespread recommendations for the essential features of media education ... can be adapted for Moving Image Education".

Starting in the 1950s, this period in media education is characterised by a protectionist stance. Peters' publication *Teaching about Film* (1961) implies that learning the film language (both in its technical as well as in its metalinguistic sense) is part of the learning about film. Nevertheless, as Sefton-Green (1998) points out, learning film language does not explicitly feature in this model's definition of media education whose aim still remains "to protect young people against the moral dangers of the cinema ... [and] to cultivate their aesthetic taste" (Peters, 1961: 15).

Texts from this period suggest that the teaching of film language is achieved simply through technical exercises which lack context (see Peters [1961] description of relevant exercises). Indeed, the actual stories behind these exercises seem to be simply an excuse for learning the grammar of film. In contrast, more recent developments in the field stress that media productions need to be relevant to children's real interests.

In the late 1960s, Lowndes' book *Film Making in School* (1968) treated film and its language as a means "to help young people develop an understanding of contemporary society" (ibid.: 9), giving the study of film a more political orientation. Moreover, the interesting point about this approach is that it moved the teaching of film away from a focus on formal grammar teaching, of the type seen above, and towards a more hands-on and inventive approach which stands in opposition to earlier approaches of teaching film-making as a linguistic form. In this way 'the

student learns more about *natural camera* and the purpose of close up than ever could be provided by instruction on the formal language of camera' (Lowndes, 1968: 49, italics in the original).

In the 1980s, the prevailing paradigm favoured applying deconstruction techniques for the analysis of media. Masterman (1980, 1985), the most prominent exponent of this approach at the time, viewed media production with scepticism, if not contempt. Discussing media production, he reduces it to mere 'deconstruction exercises' that students should undertake in order to reveal the conventions employed by the moving image media in constructing meaning. In this way, production acts simply as a means whereby students demonstrate or 'prove' their understanding of the corresponding topic for analysis. Furthermore, as Sefton-Green (1998: 44) observes in relation to the above paradigm, "the emphasis on reading and analytical techniques in effect prioritised the linguistic dimension. The notion of 'the languages of the media' thus became one of the central metaphors of the subject". On the same note, Ferguson (1981: 46) advocates "encouraging students to manipulate televisual or filmic language for a *specific purpose* not to express oneself, but to manufacture a meaning through the conscious manipulation of production techniques and norms" (italics in the original). Any potential here for students to express themselves becomes almost suppressed.

In doing so, the 'deconstructionist' model seemed to prioritise the teaching of a critical metalanguage rather than attempting to engage students in film making activities. It is this polarization between critique and production (the linguistic and the expressive) which this thesis will challenge and try to address by providing an approach that synthesizes the two.

In the years that followed the 1980s, the status of practical moving image work in schools gradually began to elevate as a result of theoretical re-

evaluation, curriculum development and advances in technology. In *Making Media*, Buckingham, Grahame and Sefton-Green (1995), influenced by the Cultural Studies paradigm, situated six case studies of different forms of media production from London schools within this developing context. Here, they stress the significance of the dialogue between theory and practice throughout, arguing that it is “only on this basis ... that more effective classroom strategies can begin to be devised” (ibid.: 13). This paradigm shift denotes a relative consensus in the field reached by that time. My work builds on this pedagogic principle and shows how this can be achieved for the teaching and learning of moving image language specifically.

The British Film Institute (BFI), having made an impact in the field with its seminal publication ‘Primary Curriculum Statement’ (Bazalgette, 1989), gradually shifted its attention - driven possibly by its institutional commitments - moving from an all-encompassing media approach increasingly towards the framework of what has been termed ‘cine-literacy’ [see ‘Making Movies Matter’ (BFI Film Education Working Group, 1999) and Parker (2001)] and ‘moving image literacy’ [see ‘Look Again’ (BFI Primary Education Working Group, 2003)]. This change of direction has two aspects. Firstly, there is a change of media: the focus is now on moving image, with the argument underlying this shift being that moving image media constitute most young people’s dominant cultural experiences. The focus is now on the moving image of film, television and video with little attention given to media such as photography, for instance, or even print media, thus abandoning the project of an all-encompassing approach to media apparent in the ‘Primary Curriculum Statement’. Secondly, there is a change of emphasis, with more appreciation of high culture (echoing the earlier Leavisite [Leavis and Thompson (1933)] and Popular Arts paradigms) at the expense of popular culture, and with the emphasis falling primarily on media language as

opposed to a critical stance on ideological issues [on this, see Masterman's (2002) criticism of the BFI's proposals, arguing that they neglect the critical and political element].

In any case, the above publications and the work of the BFI at the time more generally can be credited with the coinage and popularisation of the idea of 'media literacy' and 'moving image literacy'. Bazalgette (2008b) sees the defining features of moving image as being the 'duration' and 'editing' – with technology making the teaching and learning of skills previously the preserve of media professionals now possible in the classroom. From a policy point of view, it could be argued that placing media literacy within the wider literacy entitlement for young people, as BFI did, is to some degree a means to an end: to make it more comprehensible for policy makers in the hope that it would be included in the school curriculum. Still, in tandem with the times, it is a powerful conception that convincingly highlights the role of media in contemporary culture and literacy as an area that needs to be learned as part of a broader notion of what it means to be literate in the digital era.

'Making Movies Matter' (BFI Film Education Working Group, 1999) advances the idea of a cine-literate person as someone with a knowledge of the history, contemporary range and social context of moving images, the ability to analyse and explain how moving images make meaning and achieve effects, and some skill in the production of moving images. Nevertheless, although other moving image media are also mentioned, (video, television, web sites, computer games), in reality the focus remained on film not only as the preferred medium but also in terms of content, with a clear preference for 'art films'.

The 'Look Again!' (BFI Primary Education Working Group, 2003) teaching guide is in some sense a sequence of the 'Primary Curriculum Statement'.

It is aimed specifically for the primary school, and although it still operates largely within the 'Cineliteracy' approach, it represents a somewhat different case, holding a middle ground between this approach and an approach that sees popular culture as a way into print literacy, as exemplified in the work of Marsh and Millard (2000) and Parry (2013), for example. The assumption that permeates the guide is that by the time they enter school, children have accumulated a vast amount of knowledge about media. Media education needs not to start with a 'clean slate' but should acknowledge what children already know about media and build on that. Nevertheless, this knowledge is often scattered and unstructured. The aim of media education today then becomes precisely this: to deepen, widen and make that knowledge explicit and give the opportunity to children to discuss and reflect on their relations with media through their productions. Furthermore, media education should aim to give learners "the chance both to see and to create moving image texts in a variety of modes from documentary and dramatic realism to fantasy and non-narrative forms" (BFI Primary Education Working Group, 2003: 49). In this way, this account has parallels with the work conducted previously by the BFI as mentioned earlier. But at the same time, it tries to strike a balance between teaching media literacy and traditional print literacy. There is an extensive and detailed description of how media, and in particular 'media language', can be taught to primary school children. Considering competence in moving image as part of a wider definition of literacy, the relevant activities are being placed within a literacy framework. This is achieved through identifying the common elements and concepts between media literacy and print literacy such as narrative, genre and character. The argument is that understanding of these elements can be promoted via any medium, visual or print. Within the same account therefore, we are seeing both directions. There are instances where media act as a springboard to motivate children and stimulate discussion and work on print literacy. There is almost an

instrumental function here as can be seen in an activity where moving image texts are being used as a starting point for poetic writing (see BFI Primary Education Working Group, 2003: 18). But at the same time media are also being taught in their own right, with the account focusing on textual elements that are specific to moving image media, such as shot composition and framing.

More recently, the notion of media literacy can also be understood in terms of the so called '3 Cs' model (Bazalgette, 2008a; Burn and Durran, 2007, Parry, Potter and Bazalgette, 2011). This model has gained prominence as a way of conceptualizing media literacy and moving image literacy and a general consensus in the field has grown around it. This will be fully discussed in the theory chapter (Chapter 3) as another lens for looking at my data. For this section, suffice it to say that of the three elements of the model - Critique, Culture and Creativity - my focus is on the element of criticality which relates to the moving image language and metalanguage. Although it can be argued that each of the strands maintains its own autonomy and value, I nevertheless acknowledge the strong and dynamic articulation that exists between all three elements. This acknowledgement is manifested through subscribing to the teaching and learning model described by Connolly and Readman (2017) as 'creative media literacy'. This consists of a critical approach to creative practice, "a critically oriented set of attributes with which students practise a systematic interrogation of their own productive processes and the meanings attributed to them" (ibid.: 245). The model and its application could have particular currency to the primary school where the received wisdom privileges an often arid version of media making, void of any sense of criticality and reflection.

2.3 Relevant empirical studies

The section above has looked at the rather theoretical pedagogic assumptions made by the various accounts in relation to the media education pedagogy. Here, the focus is on examining mainly empirical studies and researched projects that concentrate on suggestions regarding the teaching and learning of the moving image.

To offer some structure and provide points for consideration for the debates surrounding teaching and learning about the moving image, I begin with considering two accounts which, though they come from wider fields of inquiry and do not describe practical projects in themselves, can have repercussions for teaching and learning as they debate the pertinent issue of whether media language can be learnt naturally and without instruction.

Paul Messaris' (1994) argument is that children learn media language almost naturally, partly because its elements correspond to everyday perceptual and cognitive functions and resemble them: for example, it could be argued that focusing one's gaze operates as a kind of 'zooming in' or 'close up'. Buckingham et al. (2005: 6) agree partly with this argument by saying that

Children develop media literacy even in the absence of explicit attempts to encourage and promote it. Indeed, many researchers and media producers would argue that children today are more media literate than the children of previous generation.

Despite this, at the same time they caution of the limits of this claim by adding that "There is often a degree of sentimentality about such claims, and they may need to be qualified in some respects" (Buckingham et al., 2005: 6).

It is likely therefore that Messaris suggestion might imply that it is primarily the basic skill of 'decoding' (certainly a core feature of any

notion of literacy) that can be acquired 'instinctively'. Media literacy is not, nevertheless, just about coding and decoding but also about developing a critical attitude, the ability not just to 'understand' but also to reflect on the processes involved and meanings made. The critical aspect of literacy then appears to be more complicated and maybe calls for more purposeful intervention in order to be learnt.

Margaret Meek's (1998) is another account that has implications for the learning of media. Meek argues that the texts are didactic themselves, they teach the skills required to access and interpret them. Understandably, the 'constituent' elements of literacy, the codes and conventions through which meanings are made, are engrained in any text and readers develop the ability to discern them over time. By extension, this function of texts can also apply to media language, as Buckingham et al. (2005: 52) observe: "Children develop media literacy partly through their encounters with the media: the media teach at least some of the competencies that are required to use and make sense of them".

Encounters with the medium can therefore enhance the understandings of the ways it operates and as such this argument could signal advocacy for closer engagements with the media and for the analysis aspect of the media. But this account still has its limits when applied to media literacy as it does not explain why certain things cannot be learnt by sheer exposure. Indeed, engagement and exposure might be helpful for learning critical examination but less helpful for making the media, as they do not automatically translate into practice. To be sure, Burn & Parker (2003b), reporting on a filming project with primary school children drawing a storyboard, confirm that there are things the young filmmakers do not know instinctively and that require instead explicit teaching:

They show a tendency to draw everything in long shot, as if needing to see whole figures against backgrounds all the time. The

convention of the closeup, with its selective indications of salient detail and its implications of social proximity, needed to be explicitly taught (ibid.: 60).

Similar difficulties with storyboards are also documented in Mills' (2008) research with young children where she concludes that its construction involves skills that don't come naturally and as such "storyboarding needs instruction" (ibid.: 6). Indeed, to note in passing that drawing storyboards - a common practice in media education - appears to be particularly problematic for various reasons as will be shown in the video analysis chapter later in the thesis with the children in the projects reported.

In any case, the question still remains: do children learn the language simply as a result of exposure to the media and to what extent? what do they precisely know about media language in particular (at each age stage) and how do they use it? If it is the case that children develop media literacy relatively 'spontaneously', then what is the role of media education in this? There is a need therefore to know what the children already know about media language both conceptually (especially as many of the relevant terms used here fall within everyday language) but also practically, what experience of production they already have and how they apply that knowledge to their practical work. Already above, in the project described, an instance of (lack of) knowledge in a particular domain (storyboarding) has been documented and we can examine more accounts in that direction.

The BECTA DV Evaluation research (Reid, Burn and Parker, 2002) was carried out to investigate the uses of video making in schools:

One school reported pupils showing far less awareness of media conventions than the teacher had expected. Almost all teachers, however, reported that after having used iMovie 2, pupils had a greater technical understanding of how the moving image is made. One teacher, for example, said: 'Editing is for them a fantastic

critical judgement about what they've done; it's an evaluation' (Reid, Burn and Parker, 2002: 27).

What we are seeing again here is a lack of knowledge of the media conventions, despite the fact that presumably these are young people that have a daily engagement with all forms of media. The report moves to suggest productive ways in which the teachers might explicitly link the practice of using digital video with critical and conceptual understanding. The role of teaching became evident in the process:

It was evident that pupils were picking up the specific language of film and DVE and the teacher consciously addressed and reinforced this. Pupils referred to, and understood, terminology such as 'cut-aways' and 'word walls' (comprising film-related language, which the pupils can point to, select, and use, in a similar way as some of them compile sentences when communicating via their specialised technology) reminded pupils of terminologies and reinforced their learning (ibid.: 51).

Two points emerge from this study: firstly, students' understanding of the conceptual framework is not intuitive but rather a product of systematic teaching; secondly - and most relevantly for this thesis - the explicit ways in which using digital video can enhance conceptual understanding via students acquiring the appropriate metalanguage which allows them not simply to 'talk' about but most importantly to think and reflect upon their practice.

If the accounts above have demonstrated areas about the media that young people appear not to know about, other research has pointed to the recognition that children know a lot more about the media than is usually assumed, particularly in areas that involve cultural knowledge, and to the fact that the vast amounts of cultural funds they possess can form a starting point for further learning around media. Indeed, this knowledge is also being used as a starting point for the interventions some of the accounts outlined here attempt. As Bazalgette (1989: 7)

contends: "Media education ... depends crucially on the knowledge that children have gained informally outside school ..." and "... in fact all media forms have developed their own conventional ways of producing meanings, and children begin to learn many of these well before they start school" (ibid.: 14). Therefore, it is acknowledged that children are being exposed to media from a very young age and as a result they have a fair amount of related experience (such as knowledge of media forms and some understanding of the workings of media language and its conventions). On a similar note, Bazalgette (2009: 19) asserts that "by the time they get to school, children have gained a repertoire of skills for interpreting narrative texts, such as inference, prediction, recognition of genres and character types and the ways in which narratives can manipulate time".

This knowledge of the media is being testified empirically in several accounts. Sefton-Green and Parker (2000: 27) found in their research on the use of edutainment software in schools that "clearly, the majority of pupils ... were involved in the culture of computers and/or gaming in their out-of-school practices and their knowledge and understanding would inevitably influence the ways in which they interpreted the software we brought into the classroom". Likewise, Marsh and Millard (2000) acknowledge the particular knowledge of the media that children bring with them to school and they urge teachers to make every effort to tap into the potential popular culture holds and include it in the literacy curriculum. Parry further confirms the close relationship children have with popular and media culture and the implications this has for learning, observing that "children participate in a 'narrative web' of popular culture texts and artefacts which enhance their literacy and identity practices" (Parry, 2013: 195).

Potter (2005) has carried out extensive research with video making in primary schools. In one such study, he examines a two and a half minute

long video produced by two Year 6 students and he concludes that “within this relatively short time frame, there is ample evidence of the sophistication of these manipulators of moving image literacy as they merge sound, image, cultural references and performance” (Potter, 2005: 5). While this assertion certainly holds true, certain gaps are identified in this overall optimistic picture by other studies. Burn and Parker summarize research in the area of media making and schools and although they recognise children’s knowledgeable and purposeful use of moving image media’s communicative forms they caution that “at the same time, a need is perceived for broad pedagogies - ways for children to learn how to understand and create media texts” (Burn and Parker, 2003a: 5). Sefton-Green and Parker (2000: 8) confirm this point claiming that “...young people might need to learn the language of film-making and this can be taught in the kinds of ways we teach other languages at school” – though the argument concerns more the inclusion of media education into the school curriculum and less so any possible similarities between print/spoken and visual language as forms of expression and the methods for their teaching and learning.

The picture that emerges from considering the above studies is a mixed one then: some research indicates that young people are capable of meaningful and articulate forms of expression with the media while others point to gaps in the knowledge and to difficulties with the manipulation of the expressive features of moving image. There is at least one area of agreement though, and this is the need for explicit pedagogies for the teaching and learning of the moving image. We can begin looking at suggestions put forward as to how this can happen.

Burn and Parker (2001b) put forward a proposal for a ‘grammar of the moving image’ that could work for its learning among young people – although they are quick to stress that “no grammar can ever give a full

definitive description of a system of communication" (ibid.: 35), as the two signification systems differ considerably, particularly around the issue of 'looseness'. In this claim, we are getting a kind of reply to the argument seen above by Sefton-Green and Parker on the moving image being taught in ways similar to other languages in school. Burn and Parker (2001b) begin by acknowledging that there are many elements present in moving image texts for which language which can be used to easily describe them does not exist, such as movement or sound, even spoken language itself and the different ways it is being uttered. They stress fittingly that such language is also required by young people to describe their experiences with the media – either as audiences or producers. Nevertheless, they suggest that

the moving image does not operate through a single grammar but it is made up of rather interwoven grammatical systems which include the grammar of film; the grammar of the human body; the grammar of the paralinguistics; the language of the word itself, usually as speech; the grammar of sound (ibid.: 36).

These 'grammars' combine in the moving image which is seen as multi-modal, comprised of different semiotic modes that interrelate, blend together and collide (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001). We are seeing here the articulation of a powerful suggestion for the learning of the moving image: not only is there a recognition of the multifaceted nature of the moving image but a way of analysing it is proposed whereby the modes are firstly taken apart to be examined and then brought back together to see what the overall effect is. In the authors' words: "We are proposing then some kind of framework that tries to describe how people make and understand meanings through the moving image, and how they do so in contexts that are inescapably social" (ibid.: 38).

In later publications, Burn and Parker (2003) and Burn (2013) elaborated further on these ideas of the moving image grammar to arrive at the coinage of the term 'kineikonic', the combined mode of the moving image, to describe the multimodal nature of film. The term kineikonic refers to the moving image in its entirety and it sees thus the moving image not simply as the mode of film alone, but as consisting of its other multimodal aspects as well, such as speech, movement, acting, lighting, sound and facial expression. The proposed grammar and the idea of the kineikonic make it possible for the young people not only to discuss the moving image but also to make it. A point nevertheless that is not so apparent in the accounts Burn and Parker present is precisely how the students involved in these projects learnt to articulate the elements of the kineikonic. As Burn and Parker (2003: 26) acknowledge, "the film itself is not sufficient to tell us the processes that occurred prior to this final, assembled multimodal product". Instead, they suggest that evidence needs to be brought in from artifacts such as storyboards and the process of production itself. These are the kinds of evidence I utilize in this thesis to provide answers to the question of how the assemblage, the layering of modes, occurs.

Parry (2017) offers a more situated and practical account, aiming at helping teachers teach the moving image, which she sees as being part of a literacy that recognizes young people's cultural experience. The book takes the form of practical suggestions that can be used for the teaching and learning of film. After dispelling a series of myths about children's films, Parry explains in detail how films can be analyzed with children. Many useful techniques are being suggested here which can be applied with the children in the classroom (e.g., freeze frame, pause, on sound/sound off). Crucially though, the account proceeds to consider the making of films with children. The advantage of these suggestions is that they emanate from researched practice and therefore, unlike similar

suggestions, they have been tried with children. The role of the teacher for encouraging children to interrogate their own responses is highlighted. Even though my research focuses primarily on the learning aspect, it fully recognizes the role the teacher plays in this process: although learning is something that the learners 'do', clearly the structure and the prompts provided by the teacher shape the form the learning would take. In a related publication, Perry stresses the crucial role of teacher in an effective pedagogy of the moving image through an approach that prompts interrogation, criticality and reflection of film's workings and of children's responses and understandings of those workings.

Far from blandly valuing the children's ideas on the basis of popular culture, the teacher took an interrogatory role, which pushed the children to consider meaning and intention directly. By asking 'Why? What does it mean? Why has the filmmaker chosen this shot or sound?' the children were not simply observing film language but more importantly, drawing on their personal responses to consider the range of possible meanings of a text (Parry, 2014: 21)

For my research, the relevance of this account lies with that fact that the researched projects undertaken and described bear similarities to mine, and I have used some of the analysis techniques during discussion of found footage with the students in the project described in the thesis. On the other hand, although it provides one of the very few researched accounts for filmmaking in primary school, offering a concrete guide for how to organise film lessons, does not consider the issue of learning the filming language in great length, something that this thesis does focus on.

2.4 Moving image literacy and identity

This section of the literature review is concerned with the relationship between moving image literacy and identity. Although identity is "an ambiguous and slippery term" (Buckingham, 2008: 1), of the many definitions one that is particularly pertinent for the purposes of this study

considers identity primarily as a constellation of “traits and characteristics, social relations, roles, and social group memberships that define who one is” (Oyserman, Elmore & Smith, 2012: 69).

Following from Street’s (1984, 2003) ideological model of literacy, reading and writing are deemed social processes and practices. Stemming from this notion, acts of meaning-making can be thought of as acts of expression that involve potentially varied representations of personal and social identity. Indeed, “we ought not to be shy about admitting that texts are made by human beings trying to represent the world” (Bazalgette, 2009: 16). This idea applies equally in the case of media where people ‘read’ and ‘write’ in forms such as blogs, video games, social media, digital video, and animation. In the productions young people create in these and other media, they insert their multiple understandings of how they view themselves and the world around them. On that note, Loerts, drawing on work by Dyson (1997) and Vasudevan, Schultz & Bateman (2010), asserts that

Students engage in multimodal literacy practices, infusing their identity into their texts as they work with the semiotic resources around them. Young children engage in many different multimodal literacy practices ... based on their interests and their purposes for creating and/or analysing texts (Loerts, 2013: 26).

To be sure, some writers argue that ‘the capacity to engage with complex issues of identity seems to be one of the primary reasons youth are so attracted to digital media spaces’ (Halverson, 2010: 2357). Indeed, this observation was proven valid for the children that were involved in the project described in this thesis as will be seen in the analysis chapters.

Such loci of creation offer therefore opportunities for identity construction, negotiation and representation. In their media productions, young people invest their interests, concerns and priorities through the different

narrations and representations they make. At the same time, as part of these endeavours, they engage in discussing and negotiating points of view that allow them essentially to reflect on the stories and characters they create. Such an instance in this thesis, was the making of and the discussion around the storyboard the children created as part of their project – discussed later in the Analysis Chapter 5.

Clearly, as implied above, there is a wider debate as to what exactly identity is, what constitutes identity for the young people - especially in an era of constantly shifting identities - and how it can be theorised. This discussion will be carried out in the theory chapter, as identity is one of the foci of this study and hence the lenses through which I am examining my data. The present section of the literature review is instead concerned rather with practical projects and the kinds of identities the children claim for themselves when engaging in media-making activities. As such, the section is exploring literature on practical projects that treat those 'stretches of digital space' as sites for identity construction and representation. The focus is then on: what aspects of their personalities, experiences, social life and culture children do bring into their moving image productions; where do they draw from; how do they use the semiotic resources of moving image language to create representations and express identities, particularly in terms of gender, ethnicity, social class and age. Of specific interest is "to determine the interests [that] motivate ... children to engage with media texts to explore their world, their developing identities, their social allegiances, their tastes and pleasures" (Burn & Parker, 2003: 5).

Coming on to specific projects, the CHICAM project (Children in Communication about Migration – also featuring a Greek partner), funded by the European Commission, is among the first ones researching how media production relates to identity and representation with specific

reference to migrant children. The report that followed the project (de Block, Buckingham and Banaji, 2005) provided evidence of the ways that video production was put into use by a number of young refugees who had found themselves in several European countries and in a range of different educational settings. Introducing the aims of the project, the researchers of the team noted that

... we wanted to ... know more about how children learn to use media technology and how they use the 'languages', generic forms and conventions of media to create meaningful statements or representations. We also expected that this process would tell us a great deal about how these children interpreted and made use of the complex media environments in which many of them lived ... (de Block and Buckingham, 2007: x).

The report's findings confirmed that production with digital video was entirely significant in the representational practices for these young refugees. It also recommended that educators should be made aware of the potential and encourage the creative use of digital technology for identity purposes by these groups of people (de Block, Buckingham and Banaji, 2005).

Of particular interest for the Greek context of my study, this study raises identity issues with reference both to local as well as to immigrant children (my project featured a number of the latter) and their respective influences by and affiliations with the global and the local cultures.

Potter's research (2005) is of particular significance for my study. In this piece of practice-based research, the author investigates a video production made by two Year 6 schoolboys in which they are constructing playful representations of their social roles in and out of school. Though possibly celebratory at times, the account taps into the literacy and cultural practices of these young makers - 'bricoleurs', as Cuthell (2002) calls them, drawing on Hebdige (1979) - to explore their productions as a

way through which a creative and distinct voice can be articulated. The study shares a number of similarities with my research and hence is of particular relevance: firstly, it refers to children of the same age as the ones reported in this thesis; secondly, although the video was produced in school, the activity did not form part of the official curriculum but rather was carried out within the 'third space' (McDougall & Potter, 2019) created between the end of the formal learning and the official end of the school year, being an activity the children were allowed to pursue just before they moved on to secondary education. Similarly, the project reported in this thesis was carried out in the 'in between' and less constrained space of an after-school club.

Several issues emerge from this piece of research that have relevance to my own study and the focus on identity in particular. The issue of voice is the first one. McLaren (2016), whose work has been predominantly concerned with issues of voice in education, and indeed of alternative voice, considers it as the ways that students define themselves, linking it thus to identity:

The term *voice* refers to the cultural grammar and background knowledge that individuals use to interpret and articulate experience ... Voice, then, suggests the means that students have at their disposal to make themselves "heard" and to define themselves as active participants in the world (McLaren, 2016:180, italics in the original).

Potter (2005) aligns with the idea of the close connections between voice - as exercised and developed by the young people - and identity expression and describes the ways by which these two elements are being associated in the video productions he examines. He sees this association being enacted through two paths: technology and play. To begin with, technology is prevalent in children's lives and makes it possible "to place control of a

medium of contemporary mass communication and production in the hands of young learners” (Potter, 2005: 5). In terms of identity, therefore, working with a familiar medium (digital video in this case) provides them with an expressive tool that facilitates the seamless unfolding but also the construction of identities in the course of the self-authoring video productions. Analysing the scenes of the production in question, Potter demonstrates persuasively how children working with digital video take advantage of “the morphing possibilities of the medium” (Potter, 2005: 21) and “the flexibility and provisionality of the ICT tools” (ibid: 19) in order to represent themselves in a number of preferred roles and related discourses within which meanings are being made. I regard this analysis to be a major contribution of Potter’s research for the purposes of my thesis, not only for revealing the identity possibilities that can be manifested in digital video productions (both in front as well as behind the camera) but also for providing a vigorous lens for looking at the data.

Play is the other strand present in moving image making - as Potter’s research shows - through which identities are being manifested and enacted. Two further observations, emanating from this article, can be made in relation to play and identity which have relevance for my work too. Firstly, Potter demonstrates how play as a conduit - here in the form of digital drama (Davis, 2011) with all the performative elements this entails - makes it possible for aspects of the children’s culture and identities to enter the production:

The performance ... results in an outpouring of play from outside of the classroom curriculum, from the discourse of the playground and the language and gesture of contemporary media (Potter, 2005: 21).

Indeed, this was the case with the video created by the children in my research: elements from their ‘playground folklore’ (Potter & Cowan, 2020) (such as the unconfessed romance between two of the video

protagonists) as well as elements from their out-of-school culture and their media experience were brought into their play in the course of the digital drama they created. In doing so, identities operating chiefly on 'external' planes enter the school-made media production: stories and events predating the video, originating largely in spaces where these children pursue their leisure activities, carried over and continued in the video storylines. This created a seamless continuum as the school and the out-of-school origins of the narrative were hard to distinguish and they eventually merged.

The second function that play serves in relation to identity expression in video making, according to Potter's findings, relates to the embracing of multiple roles that it allows on the part of the participants. Drawing on Carroll (2002), Potter argues that "the mutable status of the medium allows those involved to assume different roles quickly, to reject the idea of a 'unitary self'" (Potter, 2005: 21). Affirming this claim, Buckingham (2003) also regards media production as foremost a space for play in which meanings (and, I would argue, identities too) cannot be fixed once and for all: the ambiguous and ambivalent nature of play in children's video productions involves constant negotiation.

Earlier (but also throughout the thesis), I noted that identity is comprised of several aspects, particularly gender, ethnicity, social class and age.

Gender, especially, "is a fundamental aspect of identity, one which people wish to assert and protect" (Pelletier, 2008: 145) - although this assertion should not imply that it is necessarily the most prominent or influential among the constituent elements of identity. In fact, Pelletier again, references Butler's concerns on the issue, arguing that "One of Butler's aims is to debunk the traditional view that gender is a more fundamental aspect of identity than anything else" (Pelletier, 2007: 114).

However (without downplaying the significance of the other elements of identity), special attention is being given to gender for the purposes of this study. This is a result of the observation made in the data that gender is indeed the aspect that is most clearly involved in and most significantly affects the construction of the children's media productions, being also the most visible element of identity displayed in their productions.

Theorisation of gender is therefore of central importance and later in the thesis, this theorisation will serve as a lens through which to look at the gendered manifestations in the productions the children made.

As such, a note of clarification is necessary at this stage: as stated in the research questions earlier in Chapter 1, this thesis is essentially about media literacy and its central focus relates to how children learn to understand and operate the grammar and the language of the moving image. Around these central concepts and notions there is a constellation of satellite concepts, one of which is identity and a subset of identity, gender. When I observe this engagement with and the making of media, it seems in many ways to be about the performance of gender.

To note here in passing, that the recognition that engagement with the media productions manifested itself largely as gender performance, will partly lead later into the development of a framework (the '3Ds') that accounts for the presence and role of gender in the expression, learning and development of moving image media language.

It is therefore important to look for theories of performance of identity. Erving Goffman (1956) offers such a theory, and this will be discussed in more detail in the Theory chapter. Goffman provides an account of how people present themselves in everyday life, but it is Butler (1999) that extends the debate around performance into the context of gender more specifically. I use both of these theories to think about how these children

perform boyhood and girlhood in their media making, and indeed doing so in a playful way - as will be shown below.

McKenzie (2005) states that performance is a bodily practice that produces meaning. The concept of performance is generally used to highlight dynamic interactions between social actors or between a social actor and their immediate environment.

Butler (1999) puts forward the related concept of performativity. This is a theory of subjectivity in which the performance of the self is repeated and dependent upon a social audience. The idea of performativity, as Butler (1999: 34) posits, states that "gender proves to be performance - that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed".

Pelletier (2007: 131), commenting on the above, argues that "the constitution of subjectivity is a reiterative practice; subjectivity is never fully settled but always remade through representational practices". This continuous remaking of subjectivity through representational practices has implications for how gender is defined. Rather than treating gender as a fixed entity, Butler argues that gender can be conceptualized as a kind of 'doing', rather than 'being' once and for all, a ceaseless activity that is realized through representation.

Furthermore, from a performative perspective, gender identity is not considered to be an internal trait that is expressed through behavior but is instead an effect of repeated behaviors that imitate gender norms. For example, a 'man' from a performative perspective is someone who repeatedly performs masculine gender norms.

It follows that for Butler 'gender' is the effect, not the cause of representation and she has thus argued that the 'effect of gender' is a

product of bodily gestures, movements, and styles of various kinds (Butler, 1999).

We have seen above that, according to Potter (2012a), performance results in an outpouring of play from outside the classroom. For the purposes of this research, I follow Sutton-Smith's (1997: 102) formulation of play which suggests that play is "what you do during recess or when you are waiting or when you have time between mundane occasions, and what it does is maintain your chosen identity by exercising commentary on that identity".

Potter's claim provides the connection between performance and play, viewing play as a manifestation and expression of the wider domain of performance. In this sense, even the acting during the video the students in this study made can be considered a form of 'play'.

A researcher who looks at how gender is performed in the context of play in Butler's terms is Richards (2012). Richards conducted a study with primary school children examining the routine performance of gender distinct play. Observing the daily repetition of many gender-differentiated modes of play, he found that through the adoption and enactment of gendered roles the children negotiated their particular positions as children and their subjectivities by playing at being superheroes, elder siblings, mothers, teachers and often figures in fantasy combat. As such, gendered differences were apparent throughout and - also matching Thorne's (1993) findings whose research has revealed the extensive repertoire of gender behaviours that school age children exhibit - girls mostly featured as mothers, teenagers, teachers, princesses, witches, dancers and pop singers, and boys tended to be professional footballers, soldiers, zombies and superheroes. Several of these roles will appear also later among the young learners participating in the present study.

An interesting observation, among many of the girls, was the issue of musicality which was a consistent element in their play. DeNora's (2000) research, mainly with young adult women, suggested that her respondents learnt to use music, and selected their particular repertoires, to construct and sustain "the doing, being and feeling that is social existence" (2000: 49). Her broader claim is that the women:

... drew upon elaborate repertoires of musical programming practice, and were sharply aware of how to mobilize music to arrive at, enhance and alter aspects of themselves and their self-concepts. This practical knowledge should be viewed as part of the (often tacit) practices in and through which respondents produced themselves as coherent social and socially disciplined beings. (DeNora, 2000: 49)

The above findings echo again in the use of music made by the two protagonist girls in the video production described in this study.

Extending the discussion of gender performance and play into media literacy, we can argue that media education is situated within the wider context of children's play lives. To be sure, Jenkins et al. (2007) contends that forms of filmmaking and media production are located by children within their play, they are playful dispositions. Performances of gender are thus carrying through into the way the children deal with the media within their play-space, for example boys doing the camera work whilst girls are acting. It is precisely in these ways that Jenkins et al. see playful dispositions being part of new media literacies. Pelletier (2007) connects again the discussion between gender performance and media-making in a piece of research where she looked at how children making computer games performed gender in the making of them. Indeed, the same could apply to video making and her conclusions link media education with Butler's ideas on gendered performance discussed above:

The students do not portray games in stereotypically gendered ways because they are boys and girls, but because they wish to produce and identify themselves as such ... It is by constructing games as gendered that the students are able to construct themselves as gendered. It is precisely by drawing on popular stereotypes about games for boys and games for girls that young people come to recognize and assert their gender (Pelletier, 2007: 140).

In later publications, Potter extended the ideas put forward in this article, introducing the concept of 'Curatorship' (Potter 2012b, 2013; Potter & Banaji, 2012). The metaphor that refers to a notion of a 'museum of the self' (Potter, 2012a) describes an active set of skills and dispositions which bridges literacy practices and identity representation and is both evident and inherent in children's media production. Crucially here, Potter establishes identity work firmly as part of any notion of media literacy, confirming once again the social dimension of media literacy practices.

Potter's (2012a) work therefore draws our attention to the fact that important identity work is being carried out in the course of play during media production: the playfulness entailed allows for the enactment of multiple identities and for constant and quick changes in representations. Indeed, the research provides ample evidence of the variety of roles the young video makers assumed through their playful performance. However, there are certain possible limitations of this study, the first of which relates precisely to the issue above. Potter offers a very clear picture of the gamut of roles and identities the children adopted and produced as part of their production. We are getting a less clear picture, nevertheless, of their social identities and backgrounds at the beginning of the project and how these played out and determined the roles they eventually adopted and their related stories.

Another point of limitation relates to the fact that there appears to be more emphasis on the kinds of identities the children produced - and the

expression of them through the means of technology and play - and less so on the semiotic and filmic resources employed for the expression of these identities. Indeed, there is more attention given to the 'cultural' element of the production, such as the subjective value, the discourses, the references and the resources the two participating boys drew from, rather than the 'critical' element; for example, how different angles and other elements of filmic language might have worked to produce aspects of the identities in question - although there is particular attention to the selection and use of music in the video creations, a relatively neglected mode and one that my study differentiates from similar pieces of research as it pays particular attention to it.

Halverson's (2010) research addresses these issues to some degree. In her study she analyses a short documentary called 'Rules of Engagement', made by a teenager who participated in the activities undertaken by Reel Works Teen Filmmaking in New York City. This non-profit organisation was established to assist teen filmmaking in out-of-school environments. Halverson is concerned here with "film production as medium that affords youth the opportunity to produce narratives of self" (2010: 2358). Drawing on Hull & Katz (2006), she asserts that "youth develop agency by merging words, rhythm, rhyme, music message and image to create personal narratives" (Halverson, 2010: 2358). Although, understandably, the notions of identity and agency (and even voice) are not the same, we can trace here their close links and how one can facilitate and develop into the other. In this respect, the notion of agency has also strong parallels with McLaren's (2016) and Potter's (2009) notion of student voice, examined above, which they also view as transpiring through the same means.

Halverson connects closely the video her participant created with his ethnic, cultural and family background which in this case is in fact a multicultural and multi-identity one. As noted above, this linkage is an

element that Potter's research is paying less attention to. She analyses the production through examining first the cultural identity the boy possesses at the time he embarks in his video making and subsequently expresses in his documentary which is in fact about his own mixed heritage and his struggles in negotiating his multiple identities. This standpoint is closer to my research focus as I have attempted a similar connection between existing identities and representations as registered in the video production. It is also quite pertinent to my study as some of the participants came from equally diverse and diasporic backgrounds.

In regard to the second point I have raised in relation to Potter's research above, Halverson's provides an approach that balances the filmic elements and identity as she attends equally to both. As she states:

This analysis demonstrates how films like *Rules of Engagement* display the construction of a viable social identity primarily through the interactions among filmic elements. Specifically, it is in the transition spaces between phases of the film where youth actively insert their understanding of how to represent complex portraits of how they see themselves ... (Halverson, 2010: 2352).

Parry's research (2013) on children, film and literacy is concerned with how primary school children's understandings of film narrative effect their understandings of narrative in print. As part of this research, she explored the memories and experiences watching film evoked for six children that participated in the project and the impact this engagement had for their identity. As she points out: "To analyse and interpret the children's story productions in oral and written form and film form, it is critical to understand the children's identities" (Parry, 2013: 87).

Through the research, we observe the place and role film occupies in children's lives and how filmic experiences operate as 'identity-shaping' factors to attach further meanings to the sense of self.

Here, the children participants talk about their experiences mainly as consumers and 'readers' of films, rather than producers. Parry begins the

analysis by describing the children's identities, traits and backgrounds prior to embarking on the project - something that Potter's research, mentioned above, did not consider fully. In doing so, we get a sense of what dispositions and 'funds of knowledge' (Moll et al., 1992) the children come with when engaging with film. The account then proceeds with descriptions of the selfhoods they construct for themselves through the discourses they articulate about the filmic encounters they had. Parry is guided in her analysis by Giddens' (1991) suggestion that self-identity is formed through the narratives that we attempt to construct about ourselves and share with others. This interplay and linkage between existing identities and those constructed during the interviews is of particular importance for my focus and analysis too.

Through the six cases she is analysing and the responses to encounters and engagements with children's films, Parry is presenting a repertoire of possibilities of identities and 'identity shifts' as a result of these encounters. The children exhibit multiple positions such as curiosity, engagement, enthusiasm and knowledge (at least theoretical at this stage) of the filmic language and how it operates when discussing about films. The example given of a girl is quite characteristic ('Eve') with a 'sensible' but at the same time limiting identity (as it became clear on a number of occasions), for whom "participation in the project became a chance to slip out of this identity from time-to-time with interesting consequences" (Parry, 2013: 104).

This identity work is being carried out primarily through play and, in agreeing with Potter, Parry also sees play as a factor facilitating identity construction and changing of roles. Indeed, "children's films provide children with some of the resources with which they can play and perform identities" (Parry, 2013: 88). There is, however, a difference between the two authors in relation to the role of play: whereas Parry is considering films as providing ideas and prompts for play ('film-inspired play') in

contexts such as home and school, Potter - without necessarily refuting the above - sees films rather as a space where play is enacted ('play-in-film') that leads to identity exploration. In both cases though, the authors agree that it is popular culture, in its various forms, that makes available the resources for these playful performances of identity.

2.4.1 Discussion on moving image literacy and identity

From the examination of the above accounts and the debates around them, a need emerges therefore for a framework that attends more closely to and is able to illuminate the interconnections between the moving image language elements and the identity elements. Indeed, all studies reviewed above begin working towards the construction of such an analytic framework - albeit with certain differences in emphasis and purpose; and they all commence from the premise that filmic texts can be analyzed as multimodal representations of self. As such, the main tenets of the frameworks proposed derive from multimodal theory (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2001, 2006) - albeit, again, with different additions and modifications in each case.

More specifically, Potter (2005) employs an adapted form of multimodal analysis, derived mainly from the work of Burn and Parker and their attempts to propose a 'grammar of the moving image' (Burn and Parker, 2001b, 2003), in order to consider "how meaning is embodied, constructed and communicated through the multiple possibilities of gesture, movement, sound, images, speech and text" (Potter, 2005: 8). At the same time, the framework is particularly apt as, crucially, it also examines the reference points the two young filmmakers drew from, both in relation to their own past as well as their own media experiences, integrating thus the social dimensions of the production process (Chan, 2005).

Halverson also grounds her framework upon the work that Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) have carried out on the analysis of visual design as a set of semiotic resources for recounting how meanings are made in multimodal texts. The purpose of the analytic framework she proposes is to make sense of how young filmmakers construct and represent identities through the films they create. However, she is of the opinion that Kress and van Leeuwen's framework is not detailed enough as it "does little to depict how the specific tools of film both cinematic (e.g., editing, cinematography) and filmic (music, action) are used to construct and communicate identities" (Halverson, 2010: 2352). She turns therefore to film theory and the formal analysis of films (Bordwell & Thompson, 2006) in order to complement the framework and develop a coding scheme that caters for the specific elements that she deems need to be examined as part of the analysis of films. In this scheme, 'phases' and 'transitions' are taken as the key units of analysis. "Phases are groups of shots that have 'semiotic homogeneity', that is, internal consistency across multiple modes" (Halverson, 2020: 2359) whereas "transitions are a specific type of phase ... typically conceived of as the spaces between phases" (ibid.). Halverson assigns increased significance to these units as "it is in the transition spaces between phases of the film where youth actively insert their understanding of how to represent complex portraits of how they see themselves" (ibid.: 2352). Within these spaces, operate the four key cinematic techniques, as proposed by film theory (mise-en-scène, sound, editing, and cinematography), that Halverson employs as coding categories in order to analyse phases and transitions. In that sense, Halverson is right to alert our attention to the specific filmic elements that need to be considered when analysing expressions of identity – it is, after all, through the manipulation of them that identity representations are being realized. It needs to be noted though that the notion of 'phase' corresponds largely to the notion of 'syntagm' that Hodge and Tripp (1984) use, which will be further

explained in the Methodology Chapter 4. For the purposes of my work, I have chosen to employ the latter notion instead as it allows for a greater variety of different types of scenes present in moving media productions. I will use the idea of 'transitions', however, as apt 'micro-locations' in the films where instances of identity work are inscribed, given also the fact that Hodge and Tripp's theory does not attend below the level of shot.

However, although Halverson (2010) purports to be inspired by social semiotics and the kineikonic mode in particular ("the analytic framework I have created captures the kineikonic mode", *ibid.*: 2361), the analysis featured does not follow accordingly on these principles and it remains largely a film theory approach. The attention given to the filmic elements and their use prevails, whereas the particular affordances of the modes and the resources they provide to the young video maker are not thoroughly explored. As a result, reliance on the formal elements and the filmic theory, more widely, becomes problematic. Potter (2012a) rightly cautions of the limits of this approach, particularly in the field of media literacy:

Evaluations of media production by children and associated instructional texts have sometimes focused exclusively on teaching formal aspects of narrative and editing concepts, drawn from the tradition of film language. ... [This] is no longer the only way of framing the subject for learners (Potter, 2012a: 122).

Film theory attends primarily on the individual creator rather than the collaborative process of creative work, part of the 'participatory cultures' (Jenkins et al., 2007) that many children engage in. Moreover, it does not offer a social theory of signification which attributes to all acts of sign-making a motivation and accounts for the purposes and interests of the sign-maker (Burn & Parker, 2001) – features that are all inextricably linked to expressions of identity. Besides, the filmic elements that Halverson includes in the framework, form already objects of interest for

multimodality theory; if not in earlier versions of it, certainly in recent developments that centre around the mode of the moving image, such as the kineikonic model (Burn, 2013).

Finally, Parry, as seen previously with Potter and Halverson, also employs the multimodal approach and more specifically the kineikonic mode of Burn and Parker (2003). Significantly, from the kineikonic she foregrounds its contribution to the consideration of both the pre-planned but crucially also the improvised elements found in students' films and of how these shape the kinds of identities these elements allow to come to the foreground and the representations the young producers create. Given that the students reported in this thesis also used an abundance of unplanned and ad-hoc elements during the making of their production, I regard this consideration as particularly helpful for my analysis.

Nevertheless - and to return for a moment to the other point of focus and the research question of the thesis - frameworks aside, Potter's and Halverson's studies reviewed above leave unexplored the issue of learning. Although they describe (in their different ways) with great clarity the outcomes of the children's identity work through the use of moving image language, there is no clear indication of how the children acquired the knowledge and skills they successfully applied in their filming and editing. In fact, there is a sense that the awareness of the expressive possibilities of media language came about almost naturally through the participants' vast experience and exposure to media and popular culture. Though this is very likely to occur with some children, especially with those 'media savvy' children, we can't assume that it is necessarily the case for every child. My study aims at providing an account of the learning process, addressing in particular what it is that the children don't know about making moving image and can't do instinctively. This account will be situated within my own proposed framework, which will provide

the link between the conceptual aspect of learning, the multimodal practice of film-making, and the identity development involved.

2.5 Conclusion

In this Literature Review chapter, a range of accounts that relate to the themes of the thesis' research questions were examined, compared and critiqued and gaps in our knowledge on these matters were indicated. The examination of these accounts has identified issues such as:

- the relation between theory and practice and the balance between instruction and discovery;
- the relation of the shot construction to its metalinguistic understanding;
- the multimodal question of the complementary modes in moving image productions, especially the dramatic modes of language and action;
- the wider sociocultural context of moving image production and its relation to identity.

These issues that came to the fore through the review of the relevant literature, constitute wider theoretical debates in the field of media education and form lenses through which the data will be examined. As such, they will further be explored in the next theory chapter which will discuss the construction of a theoretical framework appropriate for attending to the data of the study.

Chapter 3 – Theory

3.1 Introduction – Towards a theoretical model

The principle focus of this research is how upper primary school children in Greece learn and use a particular aspect of media literacy, that of moving image media language.

After having reviewed the relevant literature, in this chapter I will specify the theories to be used to address the above question and its sub-questions, for the analysis and interpretation of the data generated by this study. I will be working towards constructing a 'customised' theoretical framework in which to discuss my data. The elements of this framework will be drawn primarily from three wider domains of enquiry pertinent to the current project, namely:

- moving image literacy and language;
- conceptual learning and development and its dialectical relation to practice;
- childhood identity and cultural uses.

Each of these areas has its own theories and foci but they will be used complementarily in ways that will contribute to explanations towards the overarching question themes.

After briefly examining the media literacy theories that have inspired this work (Section 3.2), I will look at what exactly media and film theorists mean by 'a language of the moving image' (Section 3.3). I will then explore theories of learning which can help us understand how students develop criticality in relation to film concepts and language (Section 3.4). Finally, I will address wider sociocultural questions, in particular the relation between identity and moving image making (Section 3.5).

3.2 Theories of Media Literacy

Taking as its starting point the fundamental characterisation of literacy as being the ability to read and write (Olson, 2009), an argument has been made in the last few decades arguing that part of literacy ought to be also media literacy, defined as the ability to 'read' and 'write' the media (Hobbs, 2010) and that a literate person of the 21st century should possess that ability too. Although the analogy with print literacy is far from unproblematic (Sefton-Green, 1996), with ultimately "the value of the literacy analogy [depending] on the level at which we decide to locate it" (Buckingham, 2003: 23), nonetheless, the importance placed on both reading and writing of the media, is a central axiom of media literacy. As Buckingham stresses, "the emphasis on literacy reminds us of an element that is often neglected in media education. For literacy clearly involves both reading *and* writing; and so media literacy must necessarily entail both the interpretation and the production of media." (Buckingham, 2003: 49, italics in the original). This view of literacy that combines 'reading' (interpretation) and 'writing' (production) is the foundation stone for the approaches to teaching and learning adopted in this thesis.

In the Introduction Chapter 1, I have pointed to the fact that there has been a plethora of proposed models attempting to specify media literacy and its constitutive elements. As a matter of fact, on the number of different models available, Buckingham (2018: n.p.) has observed that "there is an unnecessary proliferation of different media literacy frameworks". On this point, Bulfin and Koutsogiannis (2012) provide a critique noting that many theories of new literacy are often as instrumentalist as the original autonomous views of literacy (Street, 2003) they purport to depart from. These facts oblige the conscientious researcher to invest a great deal of energy in sifting through the options and selecting the elements most appropriate to the task in hand. For this research project, I investigated a number of media literacy theories and

chose the elements that seemed potentially most productive for the specific context and purposes of my research. The resulting theoretical framework followed in this thesis is therefore a unique synthesis, and not a simple application of any pre-existing theory.

Initially, in the same Chapter 1, I acknowledged that the framework of media literacy proposed by BFI (Bazalgette 1989) has gained widespread acceptance as it has the merit of being both comprehensive and functional. This is a framework which identifies six 'key areas' of knowledge and understanding about the media: agencies, categories, technologies, languages, audiences and representations.

Drawing on BFI's categorization, Buckingham (2003) has made certain adaptations to this model and proposes a conceptual framework which identifies four areas of knowledge and understanding about the media or concepts that media literacy is concerned with: production, representation, audience and language. As noted previously, the focus of this thesis is on the 'media language' aspect of media literacy and specifically on the language of the moving image media, examined further below. For Buckingham, media literacy is therefore about competence as well as conceptual understanding of the key areas described. Useful as it may be in defining the areas of concern for media education one must possess competence of as 'concepts' rather than a specific body of knowledge, this conceptual framework still has certain limitations since important dimensions of media literacy such as culture and creativity are not being mentioned explicitly.

Mihailidis (2014) proposes a more analytical and encompassing model of media literacy, known as 'the 5As'. This model expands significantly the elements that media literacy should cover, comprising areas Buckingham's model does not adequately consider. Figure 3.1 below outlines these elements, with the key ones being 'Access', 'Assessment', 'Awareness', 'Appreciation', 'Audience'. Significantly for this thesis, the

'5As' model pays particular attention to the element of production and creating media ('Action') as well as to the elements of 'Voice' and 'Agency' which were considered in the discussion of identity in the Literature Review Chapter 2.

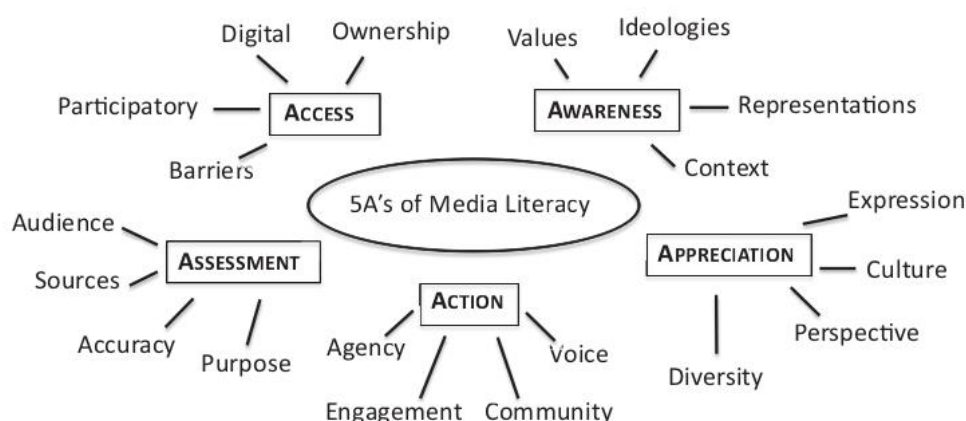


Figure 3.1: The 5As media literacy model (Mihailidis, 2014: 146)

McDougall and Ward (2017) have also advocated for and made use of the above model in the work he has carried out with secondary school students. In addition to considering and applying the above elements of media literacy, he calls for a critical engagement with media texts, arguing for media literacy to be considered rather as 'critical literacy'. They expound this further by specifying that taking such a stance involves (a) understanding the powerful nature of media; (b) engaging with media in order to be creative with media and to be able to represent yourself; and - crucially for the construction of my theoretical framework - (c) reading media critically, including the close "analysis of still and moving image, looking at the ways in which meaning is conveyed through choices made with regard to, for example, camera, editing, sound and effects" (McDougall and Ward, 2017: 1). This thesis subscribes to this model and has taken much of its inspiration from the critical notion of media literacy. As a matter of fact, the reflective element that was employed as part of

the teaching and learning had a strong critical orientation, along the lines of being described above.

Another model of media literacy that has similarly gained prominence is 'the 3Cs model', standing for 'Cultural', 'Creative' and 'Critical'. This concise formulation of media literacy, described by Burn and Durran (2007), expands on BFI's and Buckingham's approaches mentioned above by considering specifically the essential elements of culture and expressive production. Burn and Durran (2007: 16) explicate their conception of the 'cultural, creative and critical' functions of media literacy thus:

Media literacy allows us to engage in cultural practices through which we make sense of and take control of our world and ourselves, in expressive practices in which we represent ourselves and our ideas, and in critical practices in which we interpret what we read, view and play.

For Burn and Durran (op. cit.), developing media literacy in education involves primarily a sociocultural engagement with meaning-making in media texts.

To understand how this process of meaning making occurs, they propose a "cultural-semiotic model" that brings together the two diverse analytical frameworks of semiotic and cultural theory. Firstly, the tools of social semiotics are employed in order to interpret meaning-making at a textual level. Secondly, they utilise frameworks from the field of cultural studies in order to provide accounts of the young learners situated as they are within their cultural and social contexts. Such an approach has merit as it facilitates a better understanding of what exactly the children know already about the media and how this knowledge could be built on. They describe this process in these terms:

... when children arrive at school, they bring with them highly developed forms of media literacy already. They have extensive *implicit* knowledge of how media texts work; and the semiotic

approach can be used to analyse *what they are already able to do*. As importantly, however, it can be used to outline what we want them to be able to do in addition... (Burn and Durran, 2007: 20, italics in the original).

Understandably, such a view contains an increased acknowledgement of children's social and cultural engagement with media, something that does not feature in many other analytical models of its kind. Burn (2009) suggests that whilst the semiotic analysis constitutes one kind of explanatory tool on a given text, cultural studies offers us an analytical dimension that productively complements the former. Without the support of a socio-cultural framework, an attempted focus on the aspects of design for meaning-making can lead to an analysis of media texts that runs the danger of de-emphasising the affective and aesthetic responses. For this reason, I shall return to the question of identity as an aspect of moving image production later in this chapter (Section 3.5)

In concluding this section, I take the view that the '3Cs' model of media literacy constitutes a holistic and appropriate framework for this thesis: it allows us to explore the productions made by the children as part of this research since it allows for an interrogation of aspects of their lived experience in the setting, as evidenced in the media texts they created.

Crucially for this study, this model provides also the foundations for considering moving image literacy - within which my research is located - as being a particular subset of media literacy that entails a number of specificities: it is semiotically, culturally and technologically distinctive whilst it involves creative production (Leach & Burn, 2004).

3.3 The 'Language' of the Moving Image

3.3.1 Introduction

As mentioned already, following the conceptual frameworks referred to above - BFI (1989) and Buckingham (2003) - the focus of the thesis lies on the language 'component' of the moving image literacy.

Nonetheless, a wider debate exists as to whether media has a language or possesses a grammar and indeed one similar to print language grammar – from where this analogy originates. This issue merits a more detailed discussion but for the purposes of this thesis suffice it to acknowledge that there are still some kind of 'unifying elements' and 'grammatical structures' in moving image texts and these types of texts have several key attributes that resemble elements typically found in written and spoken language.

In relation to this issue, Bazalgette contends that "It is often assumed that visual texts in particular do not have a language: they are just 'transparent' and obvious. But in fact, all media forms have developed their own conventional ways of producing meanings" (Bazalgette, 1989: 14). Even though, it must be stressed that some scholars, such as Bezemer and Kress (2015), prefer to use the term 'semiotic resources' and, even more specifically, 'modes' rather than 'media language' for these key attributes. These terms are chosen not merely for the purpose of using terminology that consciously breaks away from any associations with conventional language but primarily because they see the functions of 'media language' as entailing different resources and affordances to the ones provided by written and spoken language.

In beginning to answer the question of how children learn the language of the moving image, a theory of what the language of moving image entails is initially needed. I will start here with the definition of media language and then proceed in the next section to outline the ways it has been conceived and what it involves specifically for each theory.

Media language refers to the ways in which meanings are created in media texts. I have already noted in the Introduction Chapter 1, that the

definition of 'media language' I will be employing in this thesis involves two aspects: it refers both to the visual language (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), or in other words the techniques, codes and conventions employed through camera work to convey the intended meanings, as well as to the verbal (and written at occasions) metalanguage: a set of specialised terms, used to classify and describe those techniques and the concepts associated with them.

3.3.2 Theories of moving image language

In this section, I discuss a number of theories of media language which have been put forward and consider whether elements of them could have any relevance to the teaching and learning of media language to children.

Firstly, I look at film semiotics as proposed by C. Metz (1974) account and then at classical Hollywood film theory as described by D. Bordwell and K. Thompson (2006). I then extend the discussion with reference to multimodality theory.

Metz, in his book *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema* (1974), uses a semiotics perspective and concerns himself mainly with two broad issues. Firstly, he tries to define the smallest unit of cinematic meaning and its equivalent within the verbal language system. He then examines whether film is a language at all, whether there is anything in film that resembles language structures, and if so, where exactly its grammar lies. Initially, he identifies the shot as the 'largest minimum segment' of filmic signification but concludes that a shot has no direct equivalent in language; it could have only an analogy with the sentence in the spoken/written language: "The filmic shot is of the *magnitude of the sentence*, so to speak" (Metz, 1974: 84, his emphasis).

For Metz then, there is no language below the shot level. Instead, it is only between shots that you can have something which could be called a

grammar, in the sense that certain structures exist which operate on that level and determine the overall meaning. As a result, he attempts to draw a kind of 'great grammar' of film shot sequences situating the analysis of film at the level of the shot within what he calls the '*large syntagmatic category*' of the image track which he describes as the codified and signifying orderings on the level of the *large* units of the film, a level that corresponds more or less to that of the 'sequence'.

The term 'large syntagmatic category' is meant therefore to indicate the difference between this approach and, for example, a shot-by-shot analysis, or an analysis within the shot itself, which is the case with Bordwell and Thompson (2006), as we will see later. This syntagmatic structure is all about shot combinations in narrative films: how the syntagms / segments relate to each other and the role they play in the unfolding of the story. Metz's theory is essentially a theory of editing as he refuses to look below the level of the shot and he codifies the possibilities of joining shots together by identifying 8 syntagmatic types existing in films:

Autonomous shot - Parallel syntagma - Bracket syntagma - Descriptive syntagma - Alternate (Narrative) Syntagma - Scene - Episodic sequence - Ordinary sequence.

In my view, the question is not so much what the shot resembles and what it is equivalent to in the linguistic universe. It is rather more important to consider whether the shot is actually the smallest unit in a film and what implications that has for the film analysis – and its teaching. There can be a counter-argument that a language below the level of the shot can exist with the 'gradients' being in fact a set of semiotic, or meaningful choices that the meaning-maker makes at different levels forming distinctive paradigms. The differences may be seemingly minimal (two medium shots of the same object with only a few degrees of difference between them) and they may not always have the

relatively fixed meanings found in written language. Nevertheless, these choices are always meaningful, they stem from an active role the maker takes in manipulating the available resources (such as focal distance, lighting, speech, dress, movement) and these are quite discernible.

On another level, Metz's categories of various syntagmatic types are somewhat too abstract and relative. This leads to difficulty regarding how to place a particular filmic sequence into one of the categories he defines, as the criteria used are often quite obscure, based on intuition rather than on rigid criteria ('why is this segment an autonomous one?'). Hence, it is difficult to see how the types of syntagms outlined here can be fruitfully used to analyze children's productions. Children's productions usually involve less formality and even intentionality of the kind assumed for the (adult) productions Metz considers here. At the same time the length of children's productions carried out in schools is usually short, too short to allow for analysis of the kind proposed by Metz.

Bordwell and Thompson, in their book '*Film Art: An Introduction*' (2006), try to set out the principles by which a film is put together. They suggest that this is done through the employment of a continuity system which is based on several elements:

First, there is *mise-en-scene* (literally 'staging an action'), which concerns the arrangement of everything that can be viewed within the frame of a film and comprises aspects of film such as setting, lighting, costume, and the behaviour of the characters. These elements can be arranged in space and time in a film. The second major area is cinematography. Arranging the elements of *mise-en-scene* is one thing, but this is done so as to be filmed and the filmmaker has to consider "the *cinematographic qualities* of the shot - not only *what* is filmed but also *how* it is filmed" (Bordwell & Thompson, 2006: 162, italics in the original). According to Bordwell & Thompson, cinematographic qualities involve three factors:

(1) The photographic aspects of the shot which comprise:

- tonalities (manipulation of film stock / exposure/ filters)
- speed of motion (fast-motion, slow-motion)
- transformation of perspective (focal length, depth of field-focus, special effects)

(2) The framing of the shot which can powerfully affect the image by means of:

- the size and shape of the frame (frame dimensions and shape)
- the way the frame defines onscreen and offscreen space
- the way framing controls the distance, angle, level and height of a vantage point onto the image (elements which are clearly below the level of the shot)

(3) The duration of the shot.

Finally, the continuity of narration is guaranteed through editing and, in fact, what is known as continuity editing. Editing refers to the way shots are juxtaposed against one another within a film. Continuity editing corresponds to a large extent to the convention of the classic Hollywood cinema of putting film together in a way that “makes it appear both logical and natural and maintains the illusion of a realistic representation of actuality” (Brereton, 2001: 42). Continuity editing guarantees the impression of a seamless flow including the establishing shot which specifies the place the action occurs, the shot/reverse shot pattern used often in dialogue scenes, and the eyeline match which is based on the belief that when a character looks into off-screen space the spectator expects to see what she or he is looking at.

Bordwell and Thompson’s account clearly looks below the level of the shot, focusing on the elements of the shot as described above. Their approach seems quite appropriate for the analysis of the children’s film as it takes into account those very elements that the children make use of in

constructing their film, namely the elements of mise-en-scene. The language of continuity seems quite suitable as language the children would need to learn, at least as a starting point.

However, Bordwell and Thompson do not have a social theory of the individuals as makers; and for certain elements such as facial expressions, action and speech as a semiotic resource, they have very little to say – and likewise Metz. Therefore, if we require tools to enable us to look at finer aspects of communicative modes, particularly in terms of their social functions in meaning making, we need to look at other theories.

Burn and Parker's (2001b) proposal for the moving image language, accounts precisely for the elements lacking in the above theories, as they stress that: "the moving image seems to require descriptive languages adequate to the different modes of communication it employs" (ibid.: 34). Making films is not just about filming and editing. It is also about the clothes people wear, the words they speak, their ways of acting, their dramatic movements and gestures. Burn and Parker regard the language of moving image as comprised both of filming and editing as well as modes such as music and performance, what Metz (1974) called (rather confusingly) the 'cinematic' and 'filmic' modes respectively – although he did not include the later set of modes in his analysis. They term this combined mode, 'the kineikonic mode', the mode of moving image, which they define as

analogous to a lexicon, but with reference to the world of the moving image. If a lexicon is a word stock, appropriated within a grammar system, a kineikon is a stock of image movement relationships only realisable in physical forms of inscription (Burn and Parker, 2001a: 6).

In essence, the kineikonic mode is an extension of the multiliteracies metalanguage and it differs in many ways to the metalanguages of linguistics and still images.

The issue with these features of the kineikonic mode, is to ensure that they are taught explicitly in classrooms and drawn more consciously into the design process.

In a later publication, Burn (2013) develops further the theory of the kineikonic mode by distinguishing between the 'orchestrating modes' (filming and editing) and the 'contributory modes'. This latter category includes, importantly for my study, the constituent modes of drama (such as language, dramatic action, posture, gaze, clothing) and that of music. Since these are all features of the film the participants in this study produced, I will consider how their conceptual understanding of filming and editing relates to their use of the dramatic modes.

I will return to the question of the multimodal nature of the moving image and the kineikonic mode in the next chapter, since, while it has significance here as a theory, it will also be considered as an analytical methodology.

3.4 From Concept to Practice: a Dialectic relationship

3.4.1 Introduction

In this section I aim to unpack how students begin to become familiar with the language and metalanguage associated with criticality and conceptual understanding and learn to become critical. Criticality, being one of the dimensions of the '3Cs' model of media literacy discussed above, is primarily about the development of language and indeed of metalanguage. Essentially, in the case of this research, metalanguage

refers to the ways that the students speak about, write about and eventually apply the filmic concepts.

In order to do this, there is a need initially to define critical and conceptual understanding, particularly in Vygotskian terms, as well as exploring the links between conceptual understanding and production work. I will begin therefore with a discussion on concepts, then elaborate on the issue of metalanguage and conclude with examining the idea of a dialectic between concept and practice.

3.4.2 Spontaneous and scientific concepts

As has been stated, the idea of concept development is central to the focus of this thesis. In reality, what the students learn here is media-related concepts and this accords with the conceptual framework reviewed above.

Vygotsky developed his sociocultural theory as the theoretical basis for the analyses he conducted of the psychological phenomena. The main tenet of sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) maintains that human cognition is a dual process of shaping and being shaped through culture.

Vygotsky was particularly concerned with the process of concept development and its relation to learning. He maintained that there are two kinds of concepts people acquire during their growing up (Vygotsky, 1986) which he termed spontaneous and scientific concepts. Spontaneous are the concepts which are formed through the immediate contact a child has with objects and are being formed in a spontaneous manner. The scientific concepts come about as a result of a series of cognitive acts of defining the features of one or more objects. The scientific concepts are formed in a conscientious and deliberate manner, and they can only be developed within the frame of a conceptual system. Vygotsky concluded that the analysis of children's spontaneous concepts shows that the child has to a greater extent understanding of the object rather than the

concept per se. On the contrary, the analysis of scientific concepts shows us that the child has initially a better understanding of the concept than the object that it represents.

In his book *Thought and Language* (Vygotsky, 1986), he took these issues further. Here, he tried to define the main stages of the development of the concepts during the process of peoples' psychological development.

After the second year of life the child begins to use speech not only as a code of communication with adults but as an auxiliary means for the formation of his/her thinking and the reflection of reality. Words, Vygotsky claims, is a first form of categorisation, classification of events, systematisation of experience and it is a result not only of the empirical assimilation of reality but also of its cognitive processing. In my research project I had instances of this happening while discussing about the shot types, as it will be further explained in the data analysis chapters. Here, suffice it to say that words that are initially introduced (for example names of shots) become concepts through a process of practical 'testing' and reflecting (talking) about them by which any 'unnecessary' elements become redundant. The concept is the amalgamation of the different functions that the word has served along the way, an abstracted (but still so full) entity of previously condensed meanings. To add to the complexity, it has to be noted that contrary to Vygotsky's experiments with made-up words, the terms used for the shot types are words that form part of the everyday vocabulary- albeit occasionally with different meaning.

Vygotsky describes the stages that concept formation goes through: In the first stage there is simply a quantitative accumulation of objects that relate based on casual and external relations.

In the second stage there is the appearance of concepts which represent clusters of isolated objects which relate to each other through objective and not subjective ties. People include in the same category objects based on different criteria. The most interesting form of thinking here is the *pseudoconcepts*, which have many external similarities with the real concepts but in fact they are fundamentally different.

In the third stage people achieve a stable, categorical taxonomy of clusters of objects on the basis of some general, common quality.

The major role in the formation of concepts is reserved for the use of the word.

In the field of media education, Buckingham and Sefton Green (1994: 148) see the difference between the two types of concepts as being about how the teacher provides to the learners:

... a body of scientific concepts which will enable them to think and use language (including 'media language') in a much more conscious and deliberate way... It must also enable them to reflect systematically on the processes of reading and writing themselves and to understand and analyse their own experience.

In this statement, the intertwined relationship between concepts and their metalinguistic expression for facilitating thinking and reflecting can already be observed. This relation will be further explored in the next section on metalanguage.

This distinction between the two types of concepts is important as it is clear that experience does have an important part to play in how we learn to watch the moving image. Buckingham (2003) rightly claims that the distinction is doubly important for media education, because here, spontaneous concepts (an individual's experience of the media in this case) have a unique relationship with scientific concepts (the 'product' of media education). The idea of scientific and spontaneous concepts is

therefore useful here as it allows for making distinctions regarding what students learn and when.

A critical point can be made here, however. Vygotsky (1986: 149) represents the acquisition of scientific concepts as if they somehow take place outside society:

What happens in the mind of a child to the scientific concepts he is taught in school?... As we know from investigations of the process of concept formation, a concept is more than the sum of certain associative bonds formed by memory, more than a mere mental habit: it is a complex and genuine thought that cannot be taught by drilling but can be accomplished only when the child's mental development itself has reached the requisite level.

Despite Vygotsky's theory being a sociocultural one, here he does not discuss how concept formation might be social so his account seems to suggest that they happen in an individualistic process. Buckingham and Sefton-Green, in their analysis of Vygotsky, acknowledge this saying:

Ultimately, his theory may lead to a limited rationalistic account of the learning process which neglects the fundamental significance of students' emotional investments in the media (Buckingham and Sefton-Green, 1994: 151).

3.4.3 Metalanguage

As has been noted earlier in the thesis, the definition of media language employed here comprises also the idea of verbal metalanguage used to describe the filmic terms. In the context of this research, specifically, metalanguage refers to a specialized vocabulary used in video, television and film in order to describe the codes and conventions, or else the language of the moving image in the manner it was firstly defined in Chapter 1. As Buckingham (2003: 38) points out "media literacy entails the acquisition of a 'metalanguage' - that is, a means of describing the

forms and different modes of communication". He goes on to also point that metalanguage is about "acquiring a technical vocabulary, for example in order to describe different types of camera angles or shot transitions" (ibid.: 73).

Metalanguage then, can be thought of as a body of terms, with terms being words which are used in specific contexts. In the context of media language, such terms are words like 'close up', 'medium shot' and 'long shot', among others.

There is an interesting point, in relation to these terms, though, that needs to be stressed here again as above. The children are already familiar with many of them from their exposure to media, but they are also familiar with these terms as words in general, as many of them are part of their everyday vocabulary. Interestingly, it is this fact which occasionally inhibits children as they try to learn the media language terms. We are thus presented with a more complicated situation, as terms which are already familiar in different contexts, have to acquire different meanings and correspond to different concepts when used within the media education context. What these terms mean to the children initially, how they begin to understand them as specific media terms, and what connections they evoke for them, as part of the Greek language, are issues that will be discussed later in the Analysis Chapter 5.

Furthermore, terms label or designate concepts; they are the 'linguistic labels' of concepts. Concepts are units of knowledge built from characteristics and they "express generalizations from particulars" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007: 14). The specific characteristics - what Gee (2005) calls 'situated meaning' - and the criteria the children employ to construct their version of concepts in relation to framing and editing, will be explored in the analysis chapters of the thesis. In effect, these are questions about the process of concept development and conceptual grasp: how exactly the children come to understand these

concepts and how do they come to express them linguistically but also textually.

In continuing this discussion, we might want to ask then what is a 'close up', for instance. Is it a concept, is it a convention or is it just a term? I would claim that 'close up' - or any other notion of type of frame, for that matter - is firstly a term which in turn 'represents' a concept. The concept implied here can be said to be the understanding of the relation between proximity, framing and meaning: the nearer or further you move the camera or how you frame a shot - the selection of what to include and what to exclude - changes the meaning of the shot.

Another dimension of the relation between term and concept is also how these elements connect with the media making aspect: As explained, with the idea of close up, for example, there is the term 'close up', the concept 'close up' but there is also the creation of a close up with the camera; these aspects may or may not connect with each other and the young learners may exhibit different kinds of understandings and uses when discussing or making a 'close up'. Later in the analysis chapters, I will show instances of these relations, particularly with the activity of photography where the children were taking photos using particular framing whilst describing them as different types of frames, and with the activity of storyboarding where again they would refer to frames using the 'wrong' term for the kind of frame they were drawing in their storyboards. Such processes that on a wider level reveal the cyclical, dialectic relation between children's making practice and their conceptual understanding will also be analysed later.

Finally, the metalinguistic terms also act as tools in the way Vygotsky (1986) talks about: they help in thinking about the concepts. When a label is applied to a concept, it gives people a way to begin to think what exactly these concepts include, and it triggers the process of thinking about the criteria that have to be satisfied for tagging a term to a

concept. This process will also be analysed later, once again in relation to the concept/practice dialectic I observe in the children's work.

3.4.4 The Concept/Practice Dialectic

Finally, it is important to add that the acquisition of conceptual knowledge is fluid and cyclical, particularly when viewed through the lens of video production work. It is not something that happens in the same way for all students and it is frequently messy and uneven. As Engestrom (2001: 137-138) observes:

It is a self-evident presupposition that the knowledge or skill to be acquired is itself stable and reasonably well defined. The problem is that much of the most intriguing kinds of learning ... violates this presupposition. People and organisations are all the time learning something that is not stable, not even defined or understood ahead of time.

Following on from this admission, we might see developing criticality not only in terms of Vygotsky's work on spontaneous and scientific concepts, but also Engestrom's (1999) ideas about expansive learning. Indeed, these theoretical ideas might be used to show how students' production work represents their conceptual understanding. For Engestrom, learning does not occur in a linear way but in a cycle between concept and practice, abstract and concrete, as we will see happening in Chapters 5 and 6, in the study of the primary school students making media. This movement can be viewed as a cycle, meaning that concepts are being learnt, applied and then reinforced through practical activity.

In an expansive learning cycle, the initial simple idea is transformed into a complex object, into a new form of practice. At the same time, the cycle produces new theoretical concepts - theoretically grasped practice - concrete in systemic richness and multiplicity of manifestations (Engestrom, 1999: n.p.).

According to Engestrom then, as seen above, the expansive learning is based on the dialectics of proceeding from the abstract to the concrete. But this is not the end of the learning cycle. Practical activity feeds back and reinforces theory, enriching and even altering the concept, if necessary, through the experience acquired from trying the concept out in practice and seeing all its manifestations, formations and range of applications it can have. This cycle will be observed several times in the course of the conceptual development with the learners in this project.

3.5 Representation of identity and culture

3.5.1 Introduction

In Chapter 2, the Literature Review, situated practical accounts were examined relating to how engagements with the moving image (production in particular) relate to identity and development. The accounts pointed to the 'inevitability' of touching upon identity issues when doing media work: media operates as an arena where identity is not just being represented but also being shaped, as it will be explained below in this section.

Here, wider theories of identity and self-representation are being considered that can shed light into how these instances of identity expression with and through the moving image manifest themselves and operate.

Specifically, in this section, the cultural aspect is considered in order to examine how the participating students, who had a certain cultural background from their social environment, expressed their cultural preferences and aspects of their multiple identities in the media productions they created, defined by the various roles they played in them, in front and behind the camera. More precisely, the particular culture where the students lived and produced their work, was reflected

on and expressed through their productions. The influences can be identified as having resulted from their media experiences, their parents' social class, their peers, the area they inhabited, and the school environment, all of which formed the discourses - "the socially constructed knowledges of (some aspects of) reality" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001: 4) - they drew from in creating their media productions.

This attention to cultural function and one of its main manifestations, identity, in media education comes as a result of the observation made that any involvement with media - either consuming it or making it - entails aspects of identity. To a large extent, this touches upon the social premise of literacy that Street (2003) talks about, as explained in the Introduction Chapter 1. Transferring this idea to media expression, means that people would not make a film or a website, for instance, unless they wanted to express something about themselves or the world around them. Burn (2003: 43) affirms this argument of the strong connections existing between moving image literacy and identity, stating precisely that: "Whenever a child makes a text, they are saying something about themselves. In moving-image texts, especially ... such representation is strongly performative". As such, and as social semiotics would also remind us (Kress, 2009) the children have particular motivations and, in their preferred ways, they depict and represent aspects of themselves and of the ways they view the world in their media productions.

The debate on students' culture and identity touches upon the cultural capital, experiences and preferences they bring with them from home lives and peer groups, societal (class, gender, race, age) as well as media experiences that will influence the scope and direction of their productions. In this manner, we can detect what it means for them to be a child, seeing the world through the eyes of children but often representing the adult world as well, as is the case for some production pieces made as part of this thesis: here the young makers show their

views of the adult world and 'rehearse' doing adult world through their media production.

It is evident then that the students perceive the social reality around them in particular ways and they depict that in their productions. In turn, the argument becomes about the way that students build an identity out of the use of their cultural resources and manifest this in their production work. The point for the research here is therefore to identify exactly where the students draw from in their productions, which aspects of their lived experience they represent and which prevailing discourses are evident in their productions. In relation to the above, there is a word of caution, nevertheless, coming from some authors in the field of media education, such as Buckingham and Sefton-Green (1994), who advise against seeing children's productions as being an area where student's cultural preferences are merely celebrated.

As a conclusion, it is for these reasons therefore that theoretical ways to explain how children construct and perform their media identities are needed. The next section is thus primarily concerned with locating theories of identity which are suitable in accounting for the motivations and choices children are making when creating media productions. It specifically looks at contributions coming mainly from sociology and theories of childhood for the development of a theoretical framework of identity in relation to media production.

3.5.2 Theories of identity

Buckingham observes that "identity is an ambiguous and slippery term" (2008: 1). There is indeed a plethora of definitions of identity, originating from disciplines such as childhood studies, psychology and socio-cultural theory, relating either to one's selfhood or to the performance of the self within society. For the purposes of this study, the aim is to delineate how

such theories could have applications to the issues surrounding media learning, particularly with reference to young people and identity formation. Buckingham (2008: 5), examining studies of identity and youth media, concludes that a recurrent theme in many of them is “how these media provide young people with symbolic resources for constructing or expressing their own identities”. An important task of the analysis therefore is to look out for the ways the children engage with such symbolic resources, through them constructing or expressing their identities.

One account of identity construction which can have currency in analysing identity in media is found in Goffman’s (1956) book *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Goffman developed a theory through which social life and interactions could be examined. At the core of this theory lies the metaphor of theatrical performance which he uses in order to describe the interactions occurring between people. The principles employed derive hence from the world of drama and theatre and are dramaturgical ones. In doing so, he aims to

consider the way in which the individual ... presents himself and his activity to others, the ways in which he guides and controls the impression they form of him, and the kinds of things he may and may not do while sustaining his performance before them (Goffman, 1956: iii).

As we are seeing, Goffman uses the notion of performance to describe the ways in which people try to form and maintain certain impressions on other people. He defines performance as “all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants” (Goffman, 1956: 8). As in theatre, performance is characterised by highly conventionalised series of behaviours with astonishingly little variety and therefore “the pre-established pattern of action which is unfolded during a performance and which may be

presented or played through on other occasions may be called a 'part' or 'routine'" (Goffman, 1956: 8).

The notion of 'performed identity' as a view of the processes by which people manage their manners and appearance so as to project an appropriate impression of themselves, can be illuminative of media identities and is deemed appropriate for this study to adopt in order to explain how the children involved chose to represent themselves in the photographic and video productions they created but also in every aspect of their presence in the project, including classroom interactions and interviews which often were highly dramatized.

For Goffman then, identity is performed and in the case of the videos produced in the project described in this thesis, the 'performing self' may have been the self that performs for the camera and doing so within the context of education and school. Goffman's notion of 'front' may be helpful here in analysing how this aspect operates. He states of the relationship of 'front' to 'performance':

I have been using the term 'performance' to refer to all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a set of particular observers and which has some influence on the observers. It will be convenient to label as 'front' that part of an individual's performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance. Front, then, is the expressive equipment of a standard kind intentionally or unwittingly employed by the individual during his performance (Goffman, 1956: 13).

In that sense, 'front' appears to be an entire way of being in a place, within a group and its related social arrangements. The analysis of the productions in the next chapters, will look for instances of "front", those aspects of the self that are expressed in the production, represented by reference to patterns of speech or to selection of music, for example. Similarly to the 'front', a 'backstage' space also exists, where individuals can rest or prepare for their role before coming 'onstage'.

Buckingham observes that critics are taking issue with some aspects of Goffman's theory, particularly in relation to the distinct separation of personal and social identity he draws on, what he has termed front-stage and back-stage behaviour. Buckingham notes on this:

Critics have argued that Goffman tends to overstate the importance of rules and to neglect the aspects of improvisation, or indeed sheer habit, that characterize everyday social interaction. More significantly, he suggests that back-stage behaviour is somehow more authentic, or closer to the truth of the individual's real identity, which appears to imply that front-stage behaviour is somehow less sincere or less honest. This could be seen to neglect the extent to which *all* social interaction is a kind of performance (Buckingham, 2008: 6).

Although some of these criticisms are valid, despite its limitations, Goffman's theory provides an effective framework for analysing the array of the particularly dramaturgical resources children employ in their media productions, not easily accounted for by other theories and as such these elements will be used in the analysis.

Having discussed how identity in general is performed through Goffman's theory, I now move on to discuss how gendered identity specifically is performed in relation to Butler's theory. This is a result of the observation made in the thesis that gender played a significant role in affecting the productions the children created in the media projects described in this thesis.

Butler (1999) proposes the idea of 'performativity' to explain the formation and representation of gender identity. According to this, "There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (Butler, 1999: 33). As such, the performance of the self is repeated and dependent upon a social audience – a formulation that echoes Goffman's ideas outlined above; Butler nevertheless centres this

around the formation of gender. The fact that gender proves to be performative prompts Salih (2002) to further point to the consequences this has for the definition of gender, according to which "Gender is not something one *is*, it is something one *does*, an act, or more precisely, a sequence of acts, a verb rather than a noun, a "doing" rather than a "being"" (Salih, 2002: 62, italics in the original).

These ideas around gender performativity relate closely to the performance and construction of gender in the children's photos and films that will be analysed in the chapters that follow (Chapter 5 and Chapter 6). In these, we will observe that the young people perform gender through their respective media productions: in both of them, they adopt roles that allow them to represent themselves as boys or girls, not because that is necessarily what they *are* but rather because that is what they wish to be seen as and identify with, as Pelletier (2007) has also observed in similar projects. These acts form repetitive manifestations that over time result in solidifying specific gender identities.

At the same time, these media productions constitute playful manifestations, exercised during play but also resembling features found in play-related activities. Gender is therefore also constructed during play and in Chapter 2 (Literature Review) we noted Potter's (2012a) observations that performance results in outpouring of play from outside the classroom. Potter's claim describes the connection between performance and play, viewing play as a manifestation and expression of the wider domain of performance.

Richards (2012) has also examined how gender is performed in the context of play in Butler's terms. Observing the daily repetition of many gender-differentiated modes of play, he found in his research with primary school children that gendered differences were apparent throughout and that through the adoption and enactment of gendered roles the children negotiated their particular positions as children and

their subjectivities by playing at being both figures found in fantasy combat and other popular culture forms as well as 'real life' characters.

Further, play has been thought of as a characteristic of new media literacy which also has a playful aspect (Jenkins et al., 2007). More specifically, Jenkins et al. have argued that forms of filmmaking and media production are located by children within their play, they are playful dispositions, and as such performances of gender are thus carrying through into the way the children deal with the media within their 'play space'.

The performance of gender can also be seen to relate to the idea of multimodality that permeates this study. In this way, we can see how the dramatic modes found in the children's media productions are incorporated in the performance of gender (being in a sense the 'means' through which gender is realised) and extend those usually perceived to be included in the making of the moving image. There is a strong connection therefore between the idea of the performance of gender and my 3Ds framework (Dialectic, Developmental, Dramatic) that will be discussed later in the thesis and which accounts for the presence and role of gender in the expression, learning and development of moving image media language.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has worked towards arriving at a synthesised theoretical framework, appropriate for dealing with the analysis of the data that will follow in the next chapters. For this purpose, a number of theories that correspond to and try to address the research questions posed in this thesis were examined. I have initially reviewed theories of media literacy and located my study within them. I then looked at how the moving image is understood as a language, and how this 'language' is used in

media and film education to provide a metalinguistic framework to scaffold children's conceptual understanding. In the next section, I explored how these conceptual frameworks relate to theories of media literacy, and how some of these expand the context into the use of other modes (such as the dramatic) as well as the strictly cinematic modes of filming and editing. Following that, I have considered theories of conceptual development, looking at how these are dynamically related to practice in a dialectical relationship. Finally, I have considered theories of identity with a particular focus on Goffman's dramaturgical theory as an appropriate framework for my analysis of both the dramatic modes in the children's moving image production and their performance of themselves in the process.

The next chapter on Methodology discusses the methodological choices that have been made for this study as well as the kinds of data that the theoretical framework developed will be called upon to analyse in the subsequent Analysis Chapters.

Chapter 4 – Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The central research question that underpins this thesis has been formulated as follows: how do upper primary school children in Greece learn and use a particular aspect of media literacy, that of moving image media language? The sub-questions are as follows:

1. What forms does media literacy take for young learners in relation to their involvement with moving image language? What do they know about it when they discuss it, and what can they do with it?
2. How does a dynamic model of analysis, production and reflection as a pedagogic approach work for the learning of moving image language and of the making with it?
3. What is the social and identity aspect of this engagement? Where do the young learners draw their references from and what aspects of themselves, their backgrounds, interests and identities do they bring into and express through their media productions?

Chapter 3 described the theoretical framework of this study. The present chapter deals with the methodological framework within which the research was designed and conducted, as well as the methods employed to generate and collect the data necessary to facilitate answers to the above research questions. It then moves on to reflect upon the appropriate analytical framework for this type of project, and the ethical issues involved. As previously noted, there is one area of overlap between the two chapters: the multimodal nature of film. Whereas in Chapter 3

this was discussed as a theory, here it will be employed as an analytical framework.

As a way of reminder, to reiterate that for the exploration of the issues pertaining this thesis I set up an interventionist project where I devised and delivered a mini-curriculum for the teaching and learning of moving image language.

I have made a preliminary assumption which states that it might be more productive to embark on the teaching of the moving image language by initially leaving out the diachronic element, the movement, both in front and of the camera itself, and instead to start with the exploration of the filmic concepts through work around still photographs as a precursor to the teaching of moving image.

As part of the project, the children were asked to create a series of media productions in stills first and then in video. Since the main aim was to determine the impact of my intervention on the learning of media language, the design required the children to work with each medium twice: for each medium there was a 'before' and an 'after' production in between which my intervention, the teaching element, was placed. This design is central to the methodology employed.

The instruments for collecting data were video and audio recordings of the lessons held; the products of the practical media activities the children were involved with; interviews with them; as well as collecting other kinds of written work they produced. The analytical methods I have chosen to adopt include specific linguistic features drawn from Halliday's (1989, 1994) functional grammar as well as elements from visual semiotics, multimodal theory and kineikonic theory (Burn, 2013; Burn & Parker, 2001a; Burn & Parker, 2001b).

As will be discussed in more detail in section 4.3 below, the methodology

eventually decided for this thesis is a hybrid one. Specifically, elements from ethnography, case study and action research methodological traditions have been drawn together to form a framework that was deemed appropriate for the investigation of the themes pertaining in this study. As such, the section will go on to elaborate the various strands of my hybrid methodology and how they relate to each other.

Initially, I am going to argue that this study entails a form of ethnographic research, so it will respond to the natural circumstances of the children's cultural practice, rather than being a programmatic endeavour. Secondly, case study features have also been considered as my teaching intervention makes a bounded case within which its outcomes can be studied; it also involves some hypothesis-testing more commonly found in case studies (Stake, 2008; Merriam, 1998). Finally, elements from action research have been drawn, particularly in terms of the reflective and the iterative nature of the project, as well as the commitment to the improvement of the teaching practice.

As a result of the above stance, it might appear initially that there are different models of research design present in this methodological approach. In this project, however, those models become hybridized and thus part of a unified framework that brings together different methodological traditions. Such hybridization can be seen, for example, in the blending of ethnography and case study, since “Both approaches employ research methods that are dynamic and have application to different contexts, sharing a variety of data collection techniques to answer a range of questions” (Parker-Jenkins, 2018: 21). This blending has led to what researchers such as Hawley (2020) (following from Parker-Jenkins (2018) who coined the hybrid term initially), have termed ‘ethno-case’ study that allows for a more flexible research design.

Such hybrid frameworks can address some of the limitations that each of the frameworks may present when used on their own (at least in the

educational research context), as many researchers in the field have pointed out [for a relevant discussion see, for example, Bloome (2011), Hammersley (2006) and Parker-Jenkins (2018)].

Furthermore, a preliminary explanation is also required as to how the various strands of the hybrid methodology and the analytical models relate to each other.

According to this, the framework described just above may make it appear as if the different parts of the analytical methodology are separate - as they would be indeed in some research traditions. Specifically, ethnography for instance, produces certain types of data which linguists might recognize as linguistic discourse analysis, whereas visual ethnographers might recognize the same data as visual ethnography. This study, however, considers all of those under the heading of multimodal discourse analysis. For that purpose, I will have a section on linguistic analysis, based on the Hallidayan tradition, and also one on multimodal filmmaking, the kineikonic theory. These two are related, nevertheless, under the umbrella of the multimodal discourse analysis framework which treats both approaches as manifestations of the same phenomenon.

In doing so, I am using a comprehensive array of settled methods that capture the nature of what I wish to explore. Under the multimodal discourse banner, those approaches become connected and form the second dimension of my hybrid methodology.

4.2 Methodological considerations

Ideally, any doctoral research project should begin with the creation of a solid and fit-for-purpose research design (Lukenchuk, 2017). Yet the development of an effective research design is more than a case of simply choosing the 'right' tool. Several parameters need to be taken into

account, such as views on the social reality, on the nature of research and on ways of investigating the social world. Collectively, these form what are known as 'paradigms': constellations of beliefs and worldviews or "intellectual *cultures*" (Oakley, 1999: 155, italics in the original) and it is well-known that the main paradigms are the quantitative and the qualitative ones. For practical and epistemological reasons, the methodology adopted in this thesis inscribes itself within the tradition of qualitative research.

Bogdan and Biklen (2007: 274) define qualitative research as "an approach to social science research that emphasizes collecting descriptive data in natural settings, uses inductive thinking, and emphasizes understanding the subjects' point of view". Researchers adopting a qualitative perspective are more concerned to understand individuals' perceptions of the world, emphasizing the importance of the subjective experience of individuals. They are skeptical about the existence of social 'facts' and question the validity of a 'scientific' or quantitative approach when dealing with human beings. In line with this tradition, this research project treats social reality as a creation of individual consciousness, with meaning and the evaluation of events seen as a personal and subjective construction (Burns, 2000). Punch (2005: 28) draws our attention to one important element which is that "qualitative research not only uses non-numerical and unstructured data but also, typically, has research questions and methods which are more general at the start, and become more focused as the study progresses". Moreover, qualitative research aims to achieve 'depth' rather than 'breadth'.

4.3 Research Design

The selection of a research methodology is a procedure of relating research questions to data which can answer these questions (Silverman

2001, Lankshear and Knobel 2004). This seems to be important for the development of a kind of methodological *reflexivity* (Mauthner and Doucet, 2003, italics in the original) or methodological *awareness* (Seale, 2002, italics in the original): how a methodology is epistemologically constructed and aligned with specific research questions.

However, owing to the prominence the qualitative paradigm has enjoyed more recently, there is now an “embarrassment of choices” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 20) in the field of qualitative research. Yet for researchers choosing to orient their work towards qualitative designs, this makes the selection of an appropriate methodology a puzzling endeavor.

During the process of carrying out the project and in reflecting about it, several considerations have been made regarding the construction of an appropriate research design.

In the initial phase of research design, the case study approach was considered. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007: 258) remark that

The case study researcher typically observes the characteristics of an individual unit – a child, a clique, a class, a school or a community. The purpose of such observation is to probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit with a view to establishing generalizations about the wider population to which that unit belongs.

Accordingly, case study is an approach to research that focuses on gaining an in-depth understanding of a particular entity or event at a specific time. Therefore, as Willig (2008: 74) asserts, case studies “are not characterized by the methods used to collect and analyze data, but rather its focus on a particular unit of analysis: a case”.

However, what constitutes a ‘case’ is not so easy to pinpoint. Case studies tend to be bounded in some discrete way by examining a specific or a set of individual(s), organization(s), school(s), department(s), or event(s). Moreover, what makes for a good ‘case’ and what does not is contested,

and the nuances of such distinctions sometimes extremely subtle. At any rate, the two key elements to be determined in any case study are to decide what is it a case of and what is the unit or 'boundaries' of study. With respect to the present research project, it could be said that a case study of an intervention was to be conducted; therefore the term 'case' in this context refers to a series of lessons in media education. The unit of study is the teaching and learning that went on, as well as the teacher (me) and the students.

Nevertheless, there were other components to my desired research project that the classic case study approach would not be able to account for adequately, such as the strong teaching element, prevalent in this study. Hence, it was necessary to turn my attention to another approach: action research.

Action research is a form of qualitative research that concerns a field of educational research whose main characteristic is the practitioners' reflective organization of investigation into classroom instruction (Elliott, 1991; Wadsworth 1997; Thomas and Ring 2004; McNiff and Whitehead 2005). This kind of research was designed to improve the teaching and learning practices which are involved in educational experience. Although there are various approaches to action research, Stringer (1996: xvi) has argued that the common features which emerge from these approaches are the following:

- Action research is empirical and reflective (or interpretative);
- It engages people or 'subjects' as active participants in the research process;
- Its outcomes are related to the lives or work of the participants.

Action research design is usually based on the following cyclical process. The first stage includes a preliminary discussion of the problem explored, data gathering, feedback of results, and collaborative action planning. The second stage concerns the participants' action, including actions

relating to learning processes. Feedback is important in this stage, as it helps participants realize the different dimensions of their problems and thus redesign their action and change their objectives. The third can be described as the output, or results, stage. It includes actual changes in the learning process which emerge from participants' re-designed action in the second stage and their reflection on the whole process.

Clearly, there were elements in my research plan that could set it within this approach, particularly the focus on the recursive teaching and the reflexive element action research involves. Nevertheless, certain parameters present in my proposed research design distinguished it from the 'classical' tradition of action research. Specifically, since media education does not feature in the Greek curriculum (see Chapter 1), this area of study is not taught explicitly through a structured subject or activity. Teachers and students simply do not discuss and reflect on media education issues. Hence, an action research organized and carried out by them proves in practice an impossible task.

An alternative way to organize an action research, as occurs in *typical* enactments of this research method (see for example Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007; Altrichter et al., 2018), could have been a kind of collaboration between the teacher, the students and myself as the researcher. However, this presupposed sufficient familiarity on my part with the context of a specific classroom and the ability to spend a considerable amount of time in this classroom. Since my research was part of a research degree, there were specific constraints that rendered this alternative impractical: namely, a predetermined time within which the research was to be conducted [see Walford (2002) for a relevant discussion] and the necessity to collect a manageable quantity of data. Another option explored was to work alongside a drama teacher, since the project to be carried out involved the dramatic arts, and drama is a subject with certain connections to the study of media. Unfortunately, it

proved impossible to identify a suitable teacher, let alone someone with media experience or interest in the subject.

At any rate, should have this been a 'traditional' action research, the teacher would attempt to investigate and solve a problem that has arisen in his/her own class. In my case, I did not intervene in an existing situation to try and modify things but, instead, I created a new set of conditions. In addition, I did not aim to assess the effectiveness of the intervention in relation to conventional curriculum goals, adjust the intervention, and then apply it in a second cycle. These are typical features of action research which distinguish it from my case study.

Finally, an ethnographical approach was considered. Ethnography has been defined as follows by Brewer (2000: 6):

Ethnography is the study of people in naturally occurring settings or 'fields' by methods of data collection which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner but without meaning being imposed on them externally.

This appeared to be an appropriate framework to capture another element of this research: the focus on the daily lives of the participants through the production of detailed descriptions of them and the ways they did specific things. Ethnography also foregrounds the participant's own interpretation of their actions and decisions (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2019), in a manner that the aforementioned approaches do not, making it a particularly apt methodological tool for a study that also aimed to explore the minutiae of the explanations and understandings children made of media language. Furthermore, apart from observing (and to some extent participating in) the lives of students inside the school, I also observed them in some of their leisure activities outside school and I discussed with them their media habits.

Concluding this section and in reflection of the multiple considerations towards devising an appropriate methodology, it appears that my research, although it shares a lot of similarities and elements with various methodological traditions, does not fit neatly into any of them. Rather, it is located at the intersection of a number of them, and it adopts eclectically elements from them, it combines them, it adapts them and it utilises them in productive ways that serve the purposes of the research.

It can be argued therefore that this is a hybrid approach and it was decided upon as it best serves my research interests; it was the best possible way to make my research feasible, after taking into consideration the particularities of the context of the project I undertook. It can be predominantly characterized as a case study of a classroom intervention, whilst carried out in the manner of a version of action research, and accompanied by a small-scale ethnographic study – or perhaps, more accurately, an ethnographically-informed study.

There are already a number of antecedents of this trend which is being applied more and more by researchers. Characteristically, from the field of media education, Conolly (2015) and Sefton-Green (1997) have also termed their methodological approach 'hybrid'. As the complexity of the phenomena observed in education and in the media landscape increases, hybrid methodologies may become more frequently used.

4.4 The case study (context and implementation)

This section explains in detail the type of case study approach that was decided upon for this research and the practical measures implemented in the field in order to elicit and collect the data required for exploring the issue of teaching and learning media language.

First, an interventionist project was set up, for which I devised a 'mini-curriculum' for the teaching of moving image language that I would also deliver in the classroom. As part of the assignment, the children had to

create a series of practical media productions, first in stills (for the exploration of the framing and composition issues) and then in video (for the exploration of editing as the defining feature of moving image). As my main aim was to determine the impact of my intervention on the learning of media language, the design required the children to work with each medium twice: for each medium there was a 'before' (or 'untutored') and an 'after' (or 'tutored') production. In between those, the teaching of media language aspects was placed. This design of 'before'-'after' is central to the methodology employed.

At this stage, the question of how to select a class in an all-day school emerged. Following Patton (1990), I constructed a purposive and convenient sampling, namely those schools to which I could have an easy access e.g. schools where former colleagues or friends were working. Finally, I selected an all-day school in a city whose local university I was affiliated to as part of the Erasmus program scholarship I was awarded at the time.

Specifically, the project was conducted in a large primary school of approximately 350 students in a provincial city of about 30,000, on a large Greek island, in 2010. I decided to organize my intervention with a group of students from Years 5 and 6 (11 and 12 years old), it being the case that these students were involved in drama classes already, which is a subject that has certain similarities to media studies, in the absence of such a subject in the official curriculum. In the event, the dramatic modes employed by the children in the projects they created, informed my analysis of their film-making and the way I theorized it.

I started with a group of seven students (four boys and three girls; one boy from Year 6, the rest from Year 5) who completed the 'before photos' activity. Soon after, three students left (two boys and one girl) and two new joined in (one boy and one girl). The team soon settled down to six students (three boys and three girls – five from Year 5, one from Year 4),

which was the group the project was concluded with: of these six students, four participated in all stages of the project, from beginning to end, and two started working with us from the stage of the 'after photos' onwards (in other words, these two students had not completed the 'before' photos). There was a further group of three students (one boy and two girls) who (although close friends and siblings of the main participants) only acted in the final video as 'extras' but otherwise had no further involvement or input into the project. In what follows, some initial background information on the four main participants in the study can be found. Further information on them can be found in their respective case studies that follow later in this chapter.

Myrto (Year 5) is a flamboyant girl, full of dynamism, always eager to see the bright side of life. She loves arts and had taken signing lessons in the past. She comes from a middle-class family and her father is a senior policeman. Anna (Year 5) is Myrto's best friend, inside and outside school and collaborator in the projects. She comes from a middle-class background. Her father is a civil servant and her mother a housewife. Aris (Year 5), a very bright and competent student, comes from a wealthy background. His parents have been separated. His father is a hotelier and his mother a jewellery shop owner. Stella (Year 5), a quiet and well-mannered girl, comes from a working-class background: her father is a builder and her family moved when she was little to this city from another part of the country in search of work. Giannis (Year 5), is of Albanian origin, though he was born and raised in Greece. He comes from a working-class family. His father is a mechanic, while his mother does temporary jobs in the tourism industry. Renalnto (Year 4), an introvert and sensitive boy, is also of Albanian origin. His father is an agricultural worker, still living in Albania, while his mother works on a casual basis, mainly as a cleaner. He is of the same age as the other participants but given that he arrived in Greece as an immigrant from Albania at a young age, he was placed in a lower year group to his actual age so that he

could participate more effectively in the lessons and learn the language. The names of the participants have been changed to preserve anonymity and, as noted, more contextual information on each child is provided within each sub-case study in Chapter 5.

Methodologically – as it will be further explained below – three of the participant children (Myrto, Giannis, Renalnto) have been dealt with in this study as individual sub-case studies, within the broader methodological framework of case study that this research has been inscribed into. The three sub-cases have been chosen not only because they represent those children with the most presence and impact on the project, but also since each one of them constitutes a particular case: different learning paths, different backgrounds (socioeconomic status, gender, class, race), different responses. Despite their small number, the cases are varied enough to be of great interest. For similar reasons that case study was chosen as a methodological approach, these individual case studies of the learners allowed me to focus on them closely and describe their learning progression by treating each of them as a ‘bounded’ case, analysing key moments of their learning in a systematic way. The sub-case studies can be found in Chapter 5 which deals with the analysis of the still photographs taken by these children. Furthermore, this choice of the sub-case studies was driven by the fact that the still photographs the children took at this stage of the project were done so individually, as opposed to the video assignment that followed which was carried out as a group work, in a collaborative manner.

Fifty sessions were held over a period of three months; sessions were usually scheduled for three to four days of the week, with each session lasting 30 to 60 minutes.

The classroom in which most sessions were held could be described as a traditional Greek school classroom: pupils sat at desks facing towards the teacher and the whiteboard, while the teacher’s desk was next to the

board on the window-side of the room, facing the pupils. This classroom was located in an old school building, which lacked contemporary educational sources e.g. the books of the library – encyclopaedias, literary and scientific books – were mainly old books. Likewise, the school building was designed along traditional architectural models: classrooms were separate rectangular rooms, one after the other, without no possibility of being united with other classrooms for common activities or connected directly with the playground.

The staff of the school consisted of the head-teacher, the deputy and 19 teachers: 12 class teachers for the Years 1-6, and seven for subjects such as PR, Music, Arts, ICT and English as a foreign language.

As mentioned earlier, this thesis proposes that it would be more productive to start the teaching of the moving image language by leaving out, initially, the diachronic element, the movement, both of the camera itself and in front of it. Instead, instruction should start with teaching the filmic concepts through still photographs as a precursor to the moving image and through concentrating first on their common elements, namely framing and composition. Part of the rationale for framing the project this way was developed during the course of my pilot study where it was proved complicated for the relative inexperienced young filmmakers to attempt to combine appropriate framing with camera movement at once. My experience as a media educator in the 'Melina project', mentioned earlier, had also led me to similar conclusions and, as pointed out in Chapter 1, this was also in line with the 'Melina project's' approach to the teaching and learning of media language. I was therefore particularly interested in subjecting the above claim to the rigorous examination a research project entails. In the relevant literature it has also been suggested that still photography can act as a precursor to moving image, in a series of 'building blocks' through the teaching of their common elements, (see Emerson, 1993). Understandably, all the elements that constitute the moving image exist already in the still photographs; except

movement. This realisation makes it a useful method to begin the teaching of moving image with stills. Once starting to work with the moving image specifically, the elements of camera movements and editing were added as fundamental features of the moving image language.

The project was therefore designed accordingly to account for the above parameters. The project consisted of a series of six stages, explained below, which apart from being itself a research design, they also suggest a way of teaching and learning the media language in the form of a cycle. I will return to the idea of this cyclical model later in the thesis.

The six stages of the project:

1. Production and analysis of the children's untutored work - Reflection

The video camera and the tape recorder were first introduced to the children as data-recording devices. The children became used to the equipment after a couple of days and they did not seem to be distracted by their presence throughout the project, an observation that has also been documented in similar projects (see Emerson 1993, Pearson 2005, Potter 2009) and the relevant bibliography (Hatch, 2002) – although this does not preclude the possibility that they may still wish to play for the camera or make jokes in front of it, as has also been documented (Cowan, 2017).

The first activity of the framing aspect was then introduced, which was the framing exercise with the still cameras - its 'before' stage. For that purpose, each child was provided with a disposable film camera (Kodak Fun Gold Flash, 27 exposures) in order to minimize the complications of camera controls. Their task was to take 12 photos on the topic of 'Myself - 24 hours of my life': a self-portrait of each one's own self and daily life.

The choice of the topic was in compliance with relevant literature in the field: Potter (2009) notes that this is a version of critical participation in

media production (as proposed by Buckingham, 2003) and that “working with subject matter which is closer to the lives and feelings of students themselves it is possible that the producers will develop a far more engaged stance in relation to the meaning-making process inherent in media production” (Potter, 2009: 94). Since one of my research questions revolves around the issue of identity in media literacy, it was hoped that this theme would facilitate the emergence of relevant representations of the students involved.

The reasons for the choice of disposable cameras were primarily practical and financial. Due to their fragility, it was not deemed appropriate to let the children take home digital cameras. Also, the cost of eight digital cameras was beyond the researcher’s budget at the time. Nevertheless, I was aware at all stages of the project that the choice of using analogue over digital cameras, for some parts of the project at least, sets certain limitations and these will be accounted for wherever appropriate. In any case, the photographs taken in the classroom later in the project as part of the intervention element, were taken with the stills function of the digital video camera utilizing therefore the affordances of digital technology.

The task was presented on the very first day, prior to any discussion about photography. No instructions were given other than the basic operations of disposable cameras: how to wind up and press the button to shoot, as well as the use of the built-in flash unit. Using the untutored stage as a research tool, I wanted to examine what the children’s existing knowledge was regarding framing and composition, what their level of media literacy was in relation to media language and what they could do without instruction.

The following day involved a discussion with the whole group about their uses of media as consumers (viewing habits, programs they watch on television, video and cinema, video games and use of computers and the

internet) and producers (use of still and video cameras). Here I wanted to investigate the kind of relationship these children had with the media as well as their understanding of various aspects of the media and their functions. Later in my analysis I connect this knowledge with the kind of photographs they took. As Buckingham (1990) has also observed for a similar project he carried out, this part of investigation was closer to audience research than teaching.

The photos taken were developed the next day and we discussed about them for the next five sessions.

2. Analysis of existing material

For the next stage, a selection of photographs from magazines and newspapers was brought in and we talked about them for the next five sessions. Again here, I wanted first to see what the students knew about media language and how its elements operate to create meaning. Gradually, I started offering suggestions about how pictures can be interpreted and what we can look for when we examine a picture closer. Here is where my teaching intervention came in as we talked about composition, framing, light, types of shots and distance.

3. Composition and framing activities [in stills]

Having looked at existing photographs at length, we moved onto another set of activities, the practical production exercises stage that lasted five sessions. Here the children took photos in the classroom and the playground making use of the video camera's still function. Children were given tasks such as to photograph the same object in close-up, medium and long shot or visualize a short narrative in a series of stills. The aim here was to examine what level of conceptual understanding had been achieved, to which extent issues explored during the 'analysis' stage could be transferred into practice.

The last activity in this block of work was to write speech bubbles for a story comprised of eight cartoon-style pictures cut out of a children's magazine and distributed in random order. The eight pictures had to be arranged by the children in the correct sequence for the story to make sense. This was used as a kind of proto-editing activity with editing being one of the foci of this study. We also looked at the different meanings produced in photos where the subjects had been placed on different and unusual backgrounds.

Having completed this part, we moved to the 'after' stage of the photography set, where I asked the children to take again another set of about twelve pictures of themselves and their day. As I had seen initially what they could do without instruction, I now wanted to see what they could do after instruction had been given so that I could trace in a later stage what they have learned from that instruction. The topic of 'self' remained the same.

4. Back to analysis of existing material, this time with the experience acquired from having done their own short productions

The next couple of sessions were devoted first to analysis of existing photographs and then to the children's photos, where the children talked in more detail about their photos and where they were asked to select - and justify their choice of - those photos from both the 'before' and 'after' sets which they thought they were the most representative of themselves and their activities.

5. First filming and first edit

The second part of the project was devoted to framing and composition in moving image. The first activity here was again for the students to create a two-minute video based on a given story, in an untutored way. The story given to them featured two people in a chase over a lost object and the children had to fill in the details and decide how it was to be visualized.

The discussion that followed the screening of the video gave the children the opportunity to identify the points they were not happy about and to start realizing which things should have been done differently in order for the story to have been understood. This realization became more apparent when we started looking at extracts from television programs - analysis of found material – highlighting issues of framing, types of shots, the breaking of shots, change of camera angles, and continuity editing. To further support learning of these issues, I used a BFI Education teaching material DVD showing examples from the filming of the novel 'Middlemarch'.

At this stage, we moved to the school's computer room (IT room) where the children made their first attempt at editing their film. At this point, they realized that this was a very difficult task since their story had been filmed in a single take, with no provision for scenes to be filmed separately.

We then moved on to short exercises where the children, through a problem-solving situation, had to film different situations around the classroom and include specific things in their work such as a 'shot reverse shot' or a dialogue between two people.

6. Filming of the final production and editing. Debriefing-reflection on the whole process

In this final stage, the children started exploring ideas for their final film (the 'after' stage of this set). Following brainstorming sessions, they decided on an idea which involved a summer bar with its barmaids being robbed by a thief. They storyboarded the plot following relevant instruction which involved completing preliminary activities on storyboards, and they broke the action down into scenes by separating the shots. They proceeded to the actual filming of the story (in two days) and then to the editing which lasted ten sessions. Debriefing sessions followed where opportunities were given for reflection on the work

accomplished. Finally, the film was shown to the whole group and further reflection and comments followed.

The table below demonstrates the organization and the stages of the case study design.

'Before' Photographs (Un-Tutored) -> Reflection ->
Teaching Framing & Composition in Stills ->
'After' Photographs (Tutored) -> Reflection ->
'Before' Video (Un-Tutored) -> Reflection ->
Teaching Framing & Composition in Moving Image ->
Storyboard ->
'After' Video (Tutored) -> Reflection ->
Debriefing & Comments

Figure 4.1: Stages of the case study design

4.5 Methods of data collection and data collected

According to Hatch (2004), in the design phase of a qualitative project, it is necessary for researchers to specify what data was collected, how and when the data was collected, and why this data was collected. This is what this section will attempt to do.

The methods employed to collect data were:

1. Video and audio recordings of the sessions held.

Each of the fifty lessons held was video- and audio- recorded with transcriptions made.

Hatch (2002: 128) points to a number of limitations in the use of video for data collection: technical (the researcher's knowledge of the equipment), economic (cost of equipment for good quality data) and ethical (intrusion into the life of others during the data collection and subsequent data-handling). Here, suffice it to say that as video technology has become more affordable and smaller in size, it is no longer difficult even for a single researcher to conduct this kind of research.

2. Interviews

Interviews were also a key method of data collection in my research design. A number of interviews were carried out with the students: group ones as a way of capturing group processes around a topic of interest and group dynamics as well as individual ones for more in-depth insights into the issues concerned.

These interviews are best described as semi-structured (Masson 2002; Legard et al., 2003) as they were conducted in an everyday conversational style. The space the interviews took place in was either the normal classroom or another classroom in the school, so as to ensure a comfortable environment for the students and also to allow for clear audio recordings. All the interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Specifically, two types of interviews were carried out:

a. Background interviews

These were held individually and during the early stages of the project. They lasted approximately 15 minutes each and children were asked about themselves and their relations to media.

b. Retrospective Interviews

These interviews were held in groups of two or three, lasted approximately 30 minutes and were conducted at the end of most sessions. Participants would be asked to explain specific learning issues which concerned them or which I had observed earlier - a kind of

“reflection on action” (Schön 1987: 26). The purpose of the students’ explications was for me to understand learning issues from their perspective, their ‘practical logic’, namely why they did ‘X’ and not ‘Z’ without me jumping to conclusions about these issues based on my understanding or the video recordings of the lessons.

3. Participant Observations

As I was simultaneously the teacher and the researcher, I engaged in participant observation. Under the circumstances, my observations could not be recorded fully at the same time as I was doing my teaching, although short notes and points for latter consideration were made.

To record the important issues of the research that emerged in the classroom - but also outside of it, in so far as I could follow the students in their other activities - I utilized a narrative system, what Carspecken (1996: 45) calls ‘field journal’ or what Evertson and Green (1986: 171) call ‘field notes/descriptive’. In that journal, I wrote down retrospectively experiences and descriptions of events and incidents that I found particularly interesting and worthy of further investigation, as well as observations relevant to my research methodological issues [what Burgess (1982) calls methodological field notes]. However, the writing of a field journal has two main dangers: (1) to generalize and not to focus on a specific issue and (2) to use a ‘quick’ explanation and abstract vocabulary. To avoid these pitfalls, I tried to write down my observations as quickly as possible [as Agar (1996: 161) suggests] after the relevant events using a low-level or a concrete vocabulary [see Carspecken (1996) for details] and refraining from a kind of ‘instant interpretation’ of what I was writing.

To summarize, the data collected comprised:

- a. video and audio recordings of the lessons,

- b. the products of the practical media activities the children were involved in, ('before' and 'after' photographs, 'before' and 'after' video, short practical exercises in both media, comic strips),
- c. transcripts of the audio recordings of the semi-structured interviews held with pupils and their teachers,
- d. pre-production written texts produced (storyboards, plans, logs and accounts)
- e. field notes of my participant observations.

The full data are available in the appendices to the thesis. Each of these items (the photographs, the storyboards and the screenshots from the film) has been given an individual number, so that each photograph or extract can be traced as part of the wider body of data to which they belong. Those references have been inserted into the data chapters in brackets after each relevant quote.

In consideration, the important issue is how the various data collection tools used interacted with each other. Initially, one informed the other: issues observed in classroom would be revisited in more depth in the interviews, where an attempt would be made for them to be clarified. The reverse was also true: issues from the interviews that had gone unnoticed, would feed back in the classroom observations.

On another level, they were also used in such a way that they enriched and supplemented data from other sources in a form of triangulation: issues and data observed in one situation were corroborated (or not) in another. In this way, using different data collection strategies and different types of data can be an effective strategy for exploring topics from different perspectives.

4.6 Data analysis

After having outlined above the various kinds of data collected, in this section I will discuss ways of analysis of the data. The methods adopted for data analysis primarily employ principles from a social semiotic theory of multimodality from which they all derive.

Although different approaches are used for the analysis of linguistic and visual data, in essence, language and image (still and moving) are different modes within a multimodal ensemble and their analysis can therefore be collectively characterized as multimodal discourse analysis, derived from Halliday's (1978) discourse analysis theory. According to Jones (2013: 1): "Multimodal discourse analysis is an approach to discourse which focuses on how meaning is made through the use of multiple modes of communication as opposed to just language".

Accordingly, the analysis of the still images and of storyboard will be based upon Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) ideas of visual semiotics (metafunctions and strata) whilst moving image data will be looked at through the lens of Burn and Parker's (2003) kineikonic mode theory for the moving image, itself a development of Kress and van Leeuwen's framework for the analysis of still image. For the analysis of the linguistic features, that is the students' writing on the storyboards and interviews, I will be using elements of discourse analysis from Halliday's (1994) functional grammar.

4.6.1 *Still images analysis*

For the analysis of the still images in Chapter 5, two analytical frameworks have been used, each serving different purposes.

- i. Sharples et al.'s (2003) photographic framework

In order to begin making sense of the large number of photographs taken by the children in the first stage of the project, a preliminary survey was made of them using Sharples et al.'s (2003) coding scheme. The aim of this research was to study and analyse children's behaviour as photographers and their attitudes to photography as they develop between the ages of 7 and 15 years.

For my purposes, however, this coding scheme had certain limitations, both as it was carried out as quantitative research with a much larger sample and with regard to the categories included. In order to examine the specifically media language issues of my project, it was necessary to introduce a 'Media Language' section that did not exist in the original coding scheme. The article's 'Technical Quality' category -which was the closest to 'Media Language'- was inadequate for my purposes. Within the new category of 'Media Language', I placed the 'framing', 'orientation' and 'angle' categories with their respective sub-categories. 'Composition' - 'background / foreground' and 'lighting' elements were also introduced. These elements are eventually discussed as part of the wider discussion on media literacy throughout the thesis.

Overall, the coding scheme proved quite useful in that it allowed me to see at a glance how categories evolve and to identify patterns. It needs to be stressed, nevertheless, that although quantifying the photographs addresses some issues, these are only generic findings. More in-depth analysis has been carried out of the pictures taken by each individual student in conjunction with the talking and interviews that went on in order to draw further conclusions.

ii. Social Semiotic Metafunctions

After acquiring an initial sense of the photographic data through Sharples et al.'s (2003) coding scheme, I made use of the explanatory scheme of metafunctions. This choice was driven by my particular interest in examining photographic representations as well as identity, how these are

communicated and how they are organised in terms of the grammar of the still image.

Halliday's systemic functional theory (1994) regards semiosis as having multiple functions. According to this, any semiotic act or text carries at the same time three metafunctions, or to put it simply, dimensions of meaning. These are: ideational (or representational: texts represent the world in some way), interpersonal (or orientational: they set up some kind of communication between the text and its audience) and textual (or organisational: how texts use the compositional elements to mean something). For each one of these functions, social semiotics makes use of an elaborate series of sub-categories and concepts. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) extend Halliday's ideas to develop a framework for analysing images. They talk, among other things, about the principle of salience (the most eye-catching element in the composition that becomes the most important item of information) and the importance of each feature in a composition according to its place in it and its size. So there are here issues of centrality, margin, top, bottom, how much background has been included and its relation to the foreground, 'vectors' (angles within the photograph which signify focus of action) between 'actor' and 'goal', 'attributes', and 'proximity', among others (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). These and other relevant notions of social semiotics will be applied in the still image analysis whenever appropriate.

4.6.2 Analysis of the storyboards

In Chapter 6, I employ further analytic concepts from Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) and Halliday (1989) to analyse the storyboarding activity the students undertook as part of the project which involved the creation of pictorial representations of the conceptual understandings and the spoken discourse around them.

Here, I draw on another social semiotic scheme, that of 'strata', which, according to Kress and van Leeuwen (2001), are 'domains of practice' within which multimodal texts make meaning. These are: discourse, design, production and distribution. Communication takes place within these strata but also through their interaction. Kress and van Leeuwen (2001: 4) define strata as follows: "Discourse is the socially constructed knowledge of reality; designs are conceptualizations of the form of semiotic products and events; production refers to the organisation of the expression, to the actual material articulation of the semiotic event or the actual material production of the semiotic artefact; distribution is the reproduction of semiotic products and events".

Strata provides an appropriate framework for a detailed description of the conception and execution of the storyboard which is a preparation stage in the design process of the final video made by the children. Indeed, as Burn (2013) asserts, "the strata work well if the object of analysis is the context and processes of moving image production".

4.6.3 Moving image analysis framework

In this section, a number of theories of media language are discussed with the aim of creating a synthesis of appropriate elements to use as framework for the analysis of the video piece and the other practical productions created by the children as part of this research project.

Firstly, I will look at the social semiotic approach of Hodge and Tripp's (1986) account and then I will extend the discussion with reference to multimodality theory. For a discussion of other theories of moving image language such as Metz and Bordwell and Thompson see the previous, Theory chapter.

Hodge and Tripp, in their book *Children and Television* (1986), use a social semiotic framework to analyse a children's cartoon episode. In order to identify the constituting elements and analyse the codes that

exist and bind together to produce the meaning, Hodge and Tripp introduce a set of concepts which they apply to the program chosen. First, there is the distinction between paradigmatic and syntagmatic structures that exist in any text. Hodge and Tripp (1986: 20) state that, "Paradigmatic structures (or *paradigms*) may be seen ... as the conceptual structures of the elements; syntagmatic structures (or *syntagms*) as the relations between them when they are combined in a message" (ibid: 20).

Further on, Hodge and Tripp identify a number of syntagmatic types, categorized according to three variables: *space*, *time* and *continuity*. In order to do this, they introduce some more terms, to cover syntagms existing at the same time (*synchronic*), at different times (*diachronic*), in the same space (*syntopic*), in different spaces (*diatopic*). Combinations of these give four possibilities:

- A. *Synchronic / syntopic syntagm*
- B. *Diachronic / syntopic syntagm*
- C. *Synchronic / diatopic syntagm*
- D. *Diachronic / diatopic syntagm*

With regard to the way in which the connections between the shots may be presented to the viewer, these variables can occur either as *continuous syntagms* where each element (shot) is immediately conjoined to the next element, so that the combinations occur between adjacent elements, or as *discontinuous syntagms* where two shots are related to each other but other shots intervene. In turn, syntagmatic and paradigmatic dimensions are themselves structured by wider formations: hypotactic and paratactic structures (ibid.: 35).

Hodge and Tripp's approach could be said to be overly technical and formalistic, thus running the risk of rationalising what is happening in a film. Problematic too is the fact that, although they pay more attention than Metz to the construction of meaning below the level of the shot, they use it rather in passing. Their theory is still largely a theory of editing:

their concern with the types of syntagms (things happening at different times, same place etc.) in reality refers merely to how two shots combine syntagmatically.

Nevertheless, these ideas about synchronic and diachronic syntagms retain some usefulness and can be applied in the context of the children's video production, and I will make use of them in my analysis. The idea of synchronic syntagm allows us to look at the shots as visual compositions; as shall be seen, this concept was applied and expanded on in the case of the opening scene of the video the children created, as will be demonstrated. The implication of the idea is that if a video stops, we get a still image, a visual design. It is a synchronic visual construction because it is taken out of the time of the movie. Of course, it cannot represent action - except maybe through vectors - but then when the movie starts again, we get the diachronic syntagm which is a temporal composition and sequence. Therefore, the diachronic syntagm is like a moving image sentence (with all the problems this formulation carries). In this way, we can begin to break down the big structures, the big syntagms, into smaller units of analysis (mini-syntagms) and see how the children make decisions about temporal and spatial design in the moving image and the different affordances space and time have.

The kineikonic mode theory as proposed by Burn and Parker (2003) is an extension of multimodality theory - originally developed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) as a framework for the analysis of still images - to account for the moving image. In their book *Analysing Media Texts* (2003), Burn and Parker analyse a student film, suggesting a methodological tool for the analysis of moving image texts based on the principles of multimodality. They account for the combined workings of a mixture of modes such as gesture, speech, sound, action, music and words and although it refers to older children, this model of analysis can be transferred to analysis of younger children's productions. In this

model, particular attention is paid to the dramatic design of the film, and is therefore an apt analytical tool for my project which also involved children playing out certain roles in their film (performing for the camera) at the same time as acting out aspects of their lives. In a more recent paper on the kineikonic mode, Burn (2013) elaborates further on the process of the disaggregation of the modes and on the process of putting of them back again to see what the overall effect is. In a sense, the modes constitute my analytical categories and I discuss them one by one in relation to the children's video. The modes in the kineikonic theory which constitute dramatic performance (the children playing out certain roles in their film, for example), also allow for a consideration of the performance of gender [in the way Butler (1999) defines it], how that relates to play [in the manner that Potter (2005) and Richards (2012) debate it], and how it relates to new media literacies [as Jenkins et al. (2007) discuss it].

In the above section, I have considered the dramatic modes which constitute an element of what I call multimodal discourse analysis. In the next section I will be talking about the linguistic aspect of multimodal discourse analysis.

4.6.4 Linguistic analysis of interviews and language used by children

As one of the aims of this study is to trace the conceptual understanding of the moving image language and metalanguage and its development, it is important to observe how this understanding comes about and manifests itself not only in the moving image practice but also in the language used to talk about it.

For the analysis of the significant structures of the language used by the children in relation to concept formation, I developed a form of discourse

analysis framework which enables a detailed exploration of the ways concepts are represented in language, based primarily upon elements drawn from Halliday's (1989, 1994) functional grammar. More specifically, I will be looking at instances of nominalisation, the structural feature which "... turns clauses (reports of events) such as *people learned* into nominals (names of objects) such as *people's learning* which may then become actors in new events (*the new learning spread*)" (Kress and van Leeuwen: 106, emphasis in the original). This transformation of doings and happenings - expressed mainly in verbs - into 'things' (nouns), conveys a more formal, permanent, stable sense of an action or process than the active, dynamic sense conveyed by verbs. As Halliday (1989: 352) puts it, "[in] nominal constructions the complexity is more static - perhaps crystalline". In short, the process of nominalisation, whereby an action becomes reified and condensed, indicates the solidification of a concept: making a general case out of taking events that happen in the world, leads into the general case becoming the 'thing', which is the concept and which is expressed as a noun. Typically, spoken language tends to use dynamic verbs and to unravel the process, while written language tends to turn fluid events into concrete, solid objects, represented by nouns. However, it is also legitimate to expect to find instances of nominalisation also in the children's talk during a later stage of their project, as a result of the concept formation and the learning process. In this way, Halliday's notion of nominalisation connects with the Vygotskian idea of spontaneous and scientific concepts: we can see how the evolving process of concept formation finds its way into language in the form of nominalisation.

The second grammatical structure to be employed here is that of lexical density, which refers to how closely packed the information is in a text. Halliday (1989) describes lexical density as the phenomenon whereby in a sentence there is a high ratio of content words (lexical items, such as verbs, phrasal verbs, nouns, adjectives) in comparison to function words

(grammatical items, such as articles, pronouns, most prepositions, conjunctions, some classes of adverb, auxiliary and modal verbs). Lexical density is related to nominalisation, mentioned above, as it is in fact nominalisation that occurs in lexical density. To measure lexical density, the number of lexical items needs to be divided by the number of ranking clauses.

In summary, language uses on the one hand nominalisation and lexically dense formulations in order to express concepts, and on the other hand, significant verbs and lexically sparse and spread-out formulations for the events, such as the processes of moving image production but also the process of developing concepts.

Finally, the other element used in the linguistic analysis attempted here is the idea of 'Theme' and 'Rheme'. According to Halliday, "the Theme is the element which serves as the point of departure of the message; it is that with which the clause is concerned. The remainder of the message, the part in which the Theme is developed, is called ... the Rheme" (Halliday, 1994: 37). The above formulation implies that where elements are placed in a sentence is not a matter of accident. The Theme is what the speaker chooses to mark as the starting point for the message that will be unfolded next. It is therefore the part of the sentence where the most prominent meaning is contained and this is stated at the beginning, with the Rheme occupying the rest of the sentence.

Although this framework can be seen primarily in the analysis of the storyboarding activity, it has been applied in varied degrees in all data chapters as spoken language was used extensively throughout the project, as expected.

4.7 Ethical issues

As Emerson (1981: 363) argues, since the 1970s the discussion of ethical issues in research has become explicit:

Intensive participation in the daily lives of those studied has always generated recurring personal, moral, and methodological decisions and dilemmas. What has changed is the willingness to address these issues and processes publicly, explicitly, and more profoundly.

One of these issues concerns the ethical decisions that researchers have to take. As such, “ethical decisions-making includes being consciously aware of one’s values, principles and allegiance to ethical codes, intuition and feelings, within a context that is characterized by professional and power relationships” (De Laine, 2000: 3). The issue of ethics can therefore be summarized as this: researchers must ensure that the individuals they study are treated with fairness and dignity.

The increased use of visual data in research, more recently, has accentuated the importance of ethical issues in handling such kinds of data. In the case of my study, in particular, ethical issues are even more pertinent since the study involves photos and video with children; this fact makes confidentiality crucial.

This study was carried out with many measures in place to ensure research ethics and safeguarding and these are explained throughout this chapter.

Before embarking on the research, ethical approval was sought and received for the research from a number of individuals and relevant organisations (the participant students and their parents, the school’s head-teacher and the class teacher, the Greek Pedagogical Institute) in order to ensure that the research would comply with ethical guidelines for researching and working with children in particular.

My attitude and manners towards the participants as well as overall conditions impacting on them were constantly monitored to ensure that

no emotional or other harm was being caused [on this, see BERA (2008) guidelines]. To guarantee anonymity and confidentiality, pseudonyms have been used instead of the children's real names. In order to ensure the security of the data, the computers used for the research were frequently backed up and the contents kept safe at all times. Data and research materials were not shared with people not related to the project and to the research.

It also needs to be stressed that in the thesis, as in future publications resulting from the thesis and upon the placement of the thesis in the UCL thesis repository, any photographs and screengrabs in which the children can be seen (for example, those showing their faces) have been digitally manipulated so that they are no longer identifiable. For that purpose, a computer software programme (called 'Rapid Resizer') has been used to turn the photographs into line drawing.

Although there are different research codes of ethics such as the guidelines of the British Educational Research Association (BERA) (2018) or the guidelines of different universities, different researchers locate ethical issues in different epistemological frames (De Laine 2000, Usher 2000). Furthermore, many researchers have noted that even when a code of ethics is chosen such as that of BERA, its application is difficult in real contexts where the researcher usually has to deal with complexities and controversies [see for example Burgess, (1989)].

This is the reason why, following Simons and Usher (2000), I see the ethical issues as situated too. One of the action research principles, quite applicable in this case, urges that researchers learn from teachers and students; researchers are therefore obliged to create rapport and establish collaboration by trying to minimize their power in relation to them. For this reason, I decided to follow a 'dialogical ethics' (Usher 2000) and negotiate with my participants the ethical issues listening to

their positions (explained in detail below). Following this type of ethics, I hope to be “a morally involved, self-aware, self-reflexive and interacting individual who holds the self personally responsible for the political and ethical consequences of their actions” (De Laine, 2000: 28).

Additionally, researchers, who wish to organize a piece of research in Greek schools, are expected to apply for permission from the Greek Ministry of Education. Their application should contain a brief summary of their research questions and methodology. When the Greek Ministry of Education grants permission, an official document is then sent to the Education Office Administrators in the area where researchers want to conduct their research. In this document it is explained that the researcher has the permission to do his/her research in the schools of the area.

Using a ‘dialogical ethics’, as described above, I decided to follow the reverse process; first to obtain the informed consent from participants (teacher, students, head teacher and students’ parents) and then to ask the permission of the Greek Ministry of Education. I discussed with the teacher and head teacher of the school the goal of my research and I made clear that my research would not be an evaluation of the school or the students’ performance but a project about how students can learn media literacy through a relatively explicit teaching method. Finally, I guaranteed their anonymity and the confidentiality of their information and they committed to collaborate and help me in my research. I further explained how data would be used, stored, and who will have access to it.

Then I visited the all-day school classroom in order to request informed consent to collaboration in the project, from the students and their parents (consent from both sides was a requirement for the students’ participation). I explained to students the purpose and the process of my research, their rights (for example they could withdraw any time) and I guaranteed their anonymity (e.g. through the use of pseudonyms) and

the confidentiality of their information. In this way I aimed to make clear to students my role, that of the researcher who wants to learn from them and who does not want to evaluate their performance in my intervention. I told them that I am also a teacher in another school. In this way I tried to establish a kind of trust between them and me. As De Laine (2000: 63) explains "to maximize the research opportunity, the researcher needs to express an appropriate intellectual and emotional attitude towards the participants; trust has to be established between the researcher and the researched".

Pupils and parents were asked to fill in forms regarding ethical issues where I made the following clear:

- The purpose of my project and a brief description of the data that would be collected.
- That the name of the school and participants' names would not be revealed.
- That all the data that would be collected, particularly the visual, would be considered confidential and would be collected and used based on the principle of participants' consent.
- That if some of the pupils ceased to desire to participate in my research, they could withdraw at any stage and I would guarantee that their voices or produced texts would not be presented in my research.
- That data would be used exclusively for research and academic purposes.

Next, I gave pupils and parents one week to think in order to make a decision about their participation. Meanwhile, I provided them with my contact details in order to answer to their potential questions or objections. Then written approval was obtained from the school, the parents and the children in advance. Further approval was granted also by the Greek Pedagogical Institute which oversaw the project and to

which I submitted, among other documents, an ethics check list (in which the above five issues were described).

4.8 Concluding thoughts on methodology

In this chapter I discussed the data collected and the methods of data analysis. The data collected consisted of observations and field notes, interviews and still and moving image productions. Through the application of multiple methods, I triangulated the data aiming to enhance the reliability of the findings, although generalisation is still not the prime aim of this study.

The data analysis framework drew from aspects of Halliday's functional grammar as elaborated in theories such as Kress's social semiotics and Burn's kineikonic mode. The ensuing multimodal discourse analysis, as an overarching analytical tool, is also consistent with the premise that discourse is located across all forms of data and moves between them in its different manifestations and that during the representation of ideas some sort of 'semiotic translation' is at play across the modes (e.g. between the image and the word and vice versa).

This is not to imply that the frameworks suggested are exclusive or that for each of the sections of data there is only this specific kind of analysis that can be applied. To be sure, given their common origin, any of the frameworks might have some applicability to any part of the data. Nevertheless, I consider the ones chosen to be the most apt for each particular purpose as I explained above.

At the same time, it is true that there is a danger that the approaches taken become separated, that the discourse is dealt with differently when spoken or visualised. Even though for analytical purposes I do treat each framework separately, in reality I am aware of the danger this involves and I try to show the unified nature of the discourse by emphasizing the

commonalities within the frame of Multimodal Discourse Analysis (Kress, 2012).

The next two chapters move to the analysis of the data in accordance with the frameworks outlined above.

Chapter 5 - Data Analysis 1: Still Image

5.1 Introduction

The central research question that underpins this thesis relates to how upper primary school children in Greece learn and use a particular aspect of moving image media literacy, that of moving image language.

In this chapter, I begin to discuss and analyse the data collected from the research conducted on the activities around framing and composition in still image which the children undertook as part of the project.

Following my argument of starting the teaching and learning with still image first, I begin with photography-related activities. I examine the 'before' and 'after' sets of photographs taken by three of the participating students in order to draw comparisons between the two sets of photos and amongst the three students. This comparison allows me to trace any changes resulting from the application of my intervention. Applying the theoretical framework outlined in the previous chapter, I offer explanations as to why particular children took particular photos of particular people, objects and situations, what they learnt in terms of media language as well as the general shape media literacy took for them.

The following section forms an account of what happened in the sessions held with the young learners in the classroom in terms of order and teaching input.

5.2 Description of photography sessions

As noted, the project described in this thesis was set up to investigate the kinds of knowledge and understanding children of upper primary school age (Years 5 and 6) have in relation to media language, specifically framing and editing as its two main components, and to suggest a way of teaching and learning it through a combination of analysis, production work and reflection on the process.

Accordingly, the research was designed to be comprised of activities in relation firstly to still photographs (for the purpose of examining composition and framing) and then to moving image (for the purpose of examining composition, framing and editing). During each of these two sets of activities, there was a 'before' and an 'after' stage. Specifically, in the 'before' stage, the young makers were asked initially to take a number of photos without any instruction. Following this, teaching elements were applied which included both analysis of existing materials as well as short production exercises carried out by the students themselves under my guidance. This was followed by the 'after' stage, during which the students were asked again to take another set of photographs. This process of 'before' -> 'teaching' -> 'after', was repeated also with the work on the moving image for which a 'before' and an 'after' video were produced, with the teaching occurring in between the two stages. Throughout the activities, opportunities for reflection on the part of the learners were incorporated both in relation to the products they created as well as the thinking and the procedures they followed.

There were about 50 teaching sessions held in total over a period of two and a half months, for 3-4 days a week, lasting 30-60 minutes each. Each set of activities (still photography and video) occupied roughly half of the overall time.

The data produced is comprised of still images (one set for the 'before' and one set for the 'after' stage), moving images and videos (short drills and exercises assigned to the students as well as the two main videos the children produced for the purposes of the project, the 'before' and the 'after') and linguistic data in the form of interviews but also of ongoing talk and discussions during the sessions.

The project began with a group of seven students (four boys and three girls: one boy from Year 6, the rest from Year 5) who worked on the preliminary activities of the project. By the time we moved to the second phase of the photography, the 'after' stage, three of the initial group had left (two boys and one girl) and two others had joined the group (one boy, one girl). This brought the total number of participants to six which was the group I concluded the activity with – five from Year 5 and one from Year 4 (although of the same age as the Year 5 students). They were all attending the school's 'after-school club'. I chose to work in this setting both for the flexibility it allowed me to have and also because I wanted to put forward the case that media education and media-related projects can be introduced and successfully incorporated within the educational space of the 'after-school club' programme.

For the still image activities, discussed in this section below, each child was initially provided with a low-cost, disposable film camera (Kodak Fun Gold Flash, 27 exposures) to minimise the complications of camera controls but also out of necessity and availability at the time of conducting the research. Each child was asked initially to take about 12 photos around the topic of 'myself' / '24 hours of my life', a self-portrait of each one's own self. The task was given on the very first day of the project, prior to any discussion about photography, as I wanted the children not to be influenced by anything that might have alerted them to the fact that something special and unusual was required from them. No instructions

were given other than the basic operations of the disposable cameras: how to wind up and press the button to shoot, as well as the use of the built-in flash unit. Using this activity also as a research tool, I wanted to examine what the children's existing knowledge was regarding composition and framing and what they could do without instruction: how they compose a shot, what they take into account, what they 'focus' on, how they perceive the task, what problems they encounter. This activity produced two types of data: on the one hand is the visual data in the form of photographs and all the practical activities the children got involved in, and on the other is the linguistic data in the form of the ongoing discussions in the classroom and the interviews held with the child photographers in relation to the tasks given.

I chose this same first session referenced above to introduce the video camera and the tape recorder. Since I would be using this equipment as data recording devices for collecting my data, I wanted the children to be familiar with them and not be distracted by their presence in classroom. At a later stage though, these would be the very tools they themselves would be using to create their own productions in the classroom – in stills and in moving image.

To add a sense of audience, I explained that the students would be sharing their photos with some of my students in England who were of the same age and wanted to get to know more about them and their lives in Greece. They were prompted to consider what aspects of themselves to include: who they are, their hobbies and interests, and their daily routines.

Initial questions about the nature of the photos and the whole process quickly emerged, with the children asking, for example, whether they could give the camera to somebody else to take pictures of them, or

whether they could photograph themselves, maybe by holding the camera in front of their faces.

I asked the children to consider and write down some ideas for the photos they wanted to take. Only two of them did. The others refused, saying they found writing boring or that they knew in their minds what pictures they wanted to take. I continued to prompt them to brainstorm for ideas, and eventually they came up with more things to photograph.

After the cameras were handed to them, the children made their first photographic attempts in the playground during the break. They came back with questions and suggestions: 'When you look through the viewfinder you can only see very far and not close'. 'I cannot have the whole school in my picture. I might have to move back a bit'.

In the next day's session, we had a class discussion about their media usage, firstly as consumers (viewing habits, programmes they watch on TV, video and cinema, use of video games and computers) and then as producers (use of still and video cameras). Here I wanted to investigate and get some insights into the kind of relations these children have with media and to later connect this information with the particular photos each of them took. The picture emerging is clearly one where the consumer element is far more prevalent over that of a producer in terms of time spent, frequency of use, knowledge, availability and possession of equipment - an observation that has also been made in relation to other similar research (Buckingham, 2003; Potter, 2009). Through the ensuing conversations with the students, it became apparent to me that while the children in question watched a fair number of hours of television, videos and films with programmes ranging from cartoons to thrillers, this was not to suggest that they were necessarily 'media savvy kids' (Potter, 2005) in the sense found in other contexts such as the UK or the US. To

some extent, this might be explained by the fact that these Greek students engaged in leisure pursuits that took place mostly outdoors, and thus away from media. Family conditions, social structures and physical geography of the rural town they lived in make this possible.

At the same time, according to their statements and as I suspected, they had never been involved in a media production project or any other media-related activity at school or elsewhere. As a result, no indication of creative production with media was recorded.

The students' usage in the role of media producer was thus confined largely to a 'memories' function: taking photos or - to a much less extent - videos at parties, birthdays, holidays and family outings without a specific audience in mind.

The question here was to what extent and in what ways would this media knowledge - no matter how limited - be transferred into their media productions that were to follow.

The photos taken in this 'before' stage (146 photos in total) by the initial seven participating children were developed the next day and returned to the students at school. We spent the next five sessions debriefing, first as a whole class, and later during two-person sessions or even one-to-one. My goals were to encourage pride in the students' own creative works by seeing them displayed in front of the class, to generate deeper thinking and more comments, and to make room for a more critical lens by which they might view their own and each other's works. I also encouraged the children to ask each other objective questions about each other's works. Issues we discussed included:

- What did you like and didn't like about the photos you have taken?
- Why have you taken this photo like that? Describe your reasons (They could explore technical aspects, such as angle, range, or lighting).

- What did you want to show? What was your goal?
- Do you feel that the photo show what you wanted to show?

Apart from covering the standard media language themes, their answers revealed a great deal about their motivation, and they extended to cover also issues about aesthetics, the function of photographs and the audience. The exact responses will be analysed later in this chapter.

The stage was set for the more formal instruction to commence. During the ensuing four sessions, I brought in a selection of photographs from magazines and newspapers for us to discuss and analyse for the next four sessions. As before, I wanted first to see what the students might already intuitively know about media language and how its elements operate to create meaning. I achieved that to a satisfactory extent through their dialogue and several 'problem-solving' situations as they continued to analyse the photographs I showed them. Gradually, throughout this process, I started to offer suggestions on other ways the pictures could be interpreted and what we could look for when examining a picture more closely. This is where the teaching element came in the project. Through discussing with the students, they were introduced to the concepts of composition, framing, light, types of shots and distance. My overall approach at this stage, rather than being an explicit teaching, was a mixed one, comprising of diagnostic elements while still offering opportunities for discussion, exploration and reflection.

Having examined existing photos at a great length, we proceeded to another set of activities which lasted five sessions. The children took photos in the classroom with the video camera's still pictures feature which allowed for instant playback and the possibility of making corrections. In this way, the digital element, with all the affordances it allows, was brought in and utilised. I gave students specific tasks such as photographing the same object in the classroom in close-up, medium and

long shots. The purpose was to see how the concepts and ideas we had discussed and examined in other people's photos could work in practice and how the students' output might have evolved as a result of the critical thinking process they had undergone by considering the elements that contribute to the making of and communicating with photographs. Similarly to before, during this phase in the process, I took the opportunity to observe how the children approached the whole activity, what problems they encountered and what decisions they made regarding the photos they took. As I noted earlier, the teaching aspect was fairly limited during this stage in the process and confined only to the very basics. At times, I would refer back to the analysis of photos the students had undergone, in order to prompt them to make relevant references and connections and to facilitate the acquisition of the new knowledge. Central to my work here were issues of how the children understood the various types of shots, the different 'definitions' they came up with, their affordances, and how they could use them in their photos.

The last activity in this block of work was to write speech bubbles for a story comprised of a series of eight cartoon-style pictures cut from a children's magazine. A set of eight pictures was given to each child and these had to be arranged in the right order for the story to make sense. We also looked at the variety of meanings expressed through elements in a photo –containing most often people– as they are placed in shifting contexts and different and often unusual backgrounds.

Having completed this segment of the process (the 'teaching'), we were ready for the 'after' part of the photography stage. Here, I asked the students to take a new set of about 12 pictures, again about themselves and their day.

Having witnessed earlier what the students could do without instruction, I now wanted to see what they could do after instruction had been given so that I could trace at a later stage what they had learned from that instruction. I decided to give them the same topic again, partly for methodological reasons (make it easier to analyse by comparing as similar things as possible) but also because many of the children themselves asked to take more pictures about their lives, having felt, it seemed, that the initial attempt had not been very successful in including everything they had wanted to include and wanting to be given a second chance.

Once the 'after' photos were developed and returned to school the next day, we discussed the results. Clearly there was an improvement, if not so much on the pictures themselves, certainly in the language used to comment on the photos – and this is an important pedagogic observation and conclusion for this segment of my research.

The next and final couple of sessions were devoted to individual interviews during which the children spoke in more detail about their photos. In these individual sessions, they were invited to select (and justify their selections) from both sets of the photos ('before' and 'after') those two to three photos which they deemed best represented their lives.

The general outcome that I observed here was that photos were chosen judged mainly on their content; for example, whether they depicted a favourite person or object or location rather than any photographic or artistic virtues. This was an initial confirmation of the prominence of identity matters in relation to media literacy and this is a theme that will be revisited again in the individual case studies that follow later in the chapter.

5.3 Analysis of the photographs

5.3.1 General notes on the coding scheme

The photographs taken by the seven children who participated in either or both phases of the still images stage ('before' and/or 'after' photos), amounted to 286 – although only those photos produced by the four children who participated in both phases were coded and more thoroughly examined in the end and have thus been included in the analysis (167 photos). Given the large number of photographs, it was thus deemed necessary to find a way that would allow me to gain an overall perspective of the children's work, particularly for the purposes of comparison between the 'before' and 'after' sets. For an initial analysis of the photographs therefore, I have made use and followed for most part the coding system and the instructions regarding the categories that have been proposed by Sharples et al. (2003) in their article '*Children as photographers: an analysis of children's photographic behaviour and intentions at three age levels*'. Nevertheless, I have modified certain categories of the Sharples et al. (2003) (largely quantitative) model so that they suit the purposes of my own research focus. I have also attached different definitions to some of the categories used in the model, again for the same reason. Most notably, I have introduced a 'Media Language' category, as the model used was not intended to consider media literacy issues particularly. Both schemes can be found in the Appendix A: Sharples et al.' original (as Table 1) as well as my own modified categories scheme (as Table 2). Four more related tables can be found in the same Appendix A: Table 3 contains the results of the coding scheme for the four children who completed both the 'before' and 'after' stages of the still photographs activities and the comparison between the two sets. Tables 4, 5 and 6 contain the individual results for each of the three children discussed in the sub-case studies (Giannis, Renalnto, Myrto

respectively) only in relation to the 'Media Language' category and its sub-categories.

For orientation purposes, I am stating here the main categories, common in both schemes, with the addition of the '**Media Language**' category in my scheme, as already stated: '**Photographic Context**', '**Subject Matter**', '**Judgement**' and '**Technical Quality**'. For a complete list of their respective sub-categories, the reader can refer to the Table 1 in Appendix A.

5.3.2 Media Language

In order to examine specifically media language issues, I have introduced a 'Media Language' section that did not exist in the original coding scheme, as the model used was not intended to consider such issues particularly. Sharples et al. (2003) 'Technical Quality' category in their original scheme - which was probably the closest - was not adequate for my purposes. As such, within the main category of 'Media Language', I have placed the 'framing', 'orientation' and 'angle' sub-categories.

For the 'composition' - 'background/foreground' and 'lighting' elements of media language, which I have also added in the same section, qualitative analysis is rather more appropriate and hence I have not coded these categories at this stage.

'Composition' includes the foreground and background elements in a picture and the choices photographers make (consciously or not) with regard to the arrangement of the various items within a frame. This interplay between features in a photograph and the unravelling of the levels of composition cannot be fully examined and understood simply by ticking boxes. How problematic this is, can be seen when considering, for example, the sub-category 'People' in a photo. Is it just the most salient person that is supposed to be coded? Sharples et al.' coding system says

yes but how do we account for the many photos where other people may also appear on the background? Quite often, this is only accidental but when examining the sense children make of the affordances of the media language, we need to know how they view the relation between foreground and background elements.

The 'Lighting' category could include things such as photos taken in artificial or natural light, photos taken against a lit background (sun or other source) as well any consideration of deliberate use of light to create an effect.

5.3.3 Comparison of the 'before' and 'after' sets of photographs

In this part, I will attempt a comparison between the 'before' and 'after' sets of photos based on the outcomes of the coding scheme. Later in this chapter, within the individual sub-case studies, I will also do a qualitative analysis where I will examine aspects such as composition and framing between the two sets in more detail, something that was not considered here.

More photos were taken in the 'after' set: 95 as opposed to 72 in the 'before', although this figure includes only the photos that came out. It was evident that the children felt freer and more comfortable taking photographs the second time around. Only one of the four has taken fewer photos in her 'after' set. They were asked again to take 12 photos and, in that sense, the total number of photos taken should not have been an issue. Nevertheless, most of them ignored that 'rule' and instead used up all the exposures in their cameras. It seems that this time around, it was difficult for them to restrain themselves once they had been given the opportunity to photograph and they took great pleasure in doing so, an observation that Sharples et al. (2003) have also made for

the children in their project. As long as there were exposures left in the film, the young photographers would most certainly try to find something to photograph, as they did indeed.

The main categories of 'Photographic Context', 'Subject Matter' and 'Judgement' of the coding scheme, mentioned above, and their sub-categories were first examined. The examination revealed that for many sub-categories there were no significant differences in the number of photos taken on each set: the number, for instance, of photos of 'children' and 'sporting activities' were the same in both sets. In other cases, any differences in the number of photos taken cannot be easily attributed to an obvious reason: counting the number of photos in each category for the 'before' and 'after' sets, no inferences could be made as to why there were, for example, more buildings photographed in the 'before' set. In all probabilities, what these findings suggest is that any differences detected here were rather a matter of coincidence. It has also to be remembered that the sample of seven children is rather too small and inadequate for generalisations pertinent to the quantitative kind. Any differences are on an individual basis rather than being collective trends and they will be examined in more detail in the section of the sub-case studies. It is also the qualitative analysis of the data that can reveal any meaningful shifts of attention in children's representations.

An attempt to compare who the children photographed mostly in either set, did not reveal major differences either. There was a hypothesis of a gendered nature that was put into test here: in the 'before' attempts, I observed that boys took more photos of boys and girls took more photos of girls. In the 'after' set, and after they had become more familiar with photographing and getting closer to each other, would have they wanted to take an increased number of photos of the opposite gender as well? The hypothesis was not proven true as the children continued,

individually, to take more photos of their respective gender. Nevertheless, in total, there were fewer males photographed in the 'after' set compared to the 'before' (24, down from 32), where at the same time there were more females (27, up from 17).

If, at first glance, the children seemed to continue in the 'after' set the kind of gender representation they had started in the 'before' stage, some other issues that emerged gave a different overall picture. It also seems that the differences are as much about content as they are about the media elements.

Another shift worth mentioning is in the number of 'Indoors' and 'Outdoors' photos taken: there were more 'Indoors' and fewer 'Outdoors' photos taken in the 'after' set. That, in combination with a considerable increase in the number of 'Domestic Interior' photos in the 'after' set (20 as opposed to 7), signals an important shift in the children's attention. Whereas school and the local environment were the immediate 'destinations' of photo locations for their 'before' photos (most of the children started photographing, full of excitement, soon after the cameras were handed to them, during school breaks and on the way home, without giving it much thought, almost like a game), in the 'after' set they appeared to have taken their time into exploring 'inner' issues such as home, family and their personal space such as bedrooms. This is despite the fact that by the time the second activity was assigned, the weather was much nicer, a condition which could have allowed for more outdoor photos.

I believe that initially the photography activity had been perceived by the children very much as an educational one, partly because it was teacher-assigned, and also due to the context of being in a school setting.

This sentiment of 'educational' on the part of the children can be evidenced in the larger number of 'Education' photos taken in the 'before' set: 25 as opposed to only 7 in the 'after' set. In contrast, whereas 'Entertainment / Recreation' had only held a marginal place in the 'before' photos taken, in the second set children took twice as many photos in this sub-category. This change in content focus suggests that the students felt less restrained in their choices and inspiration for their second efforts. Indeed, in the 'after' set, the children explored more things and they extended the range of themes they thought that can be photographed: there were eight sub-categories in the classification scheme where not a single photo had existed in the 'before' set (Countryside, Toy/game, Pictures/photo/poster, Landscape, Plants/trees, Exhibition quality, Close up, High angle). Though not entirely clear why preference was given to particular categories and not others, that number fell to four in the 'after' photos ('Unusual subject', 'Manmade object', 'Body part/back view', 'In vehicle' were the only four categories where no photos were recorded in the 'after' set). That fact alone suggests that the children became more adventurous in their second set which resulted in more diversity in their photographs – both in terms of content as well as in form.

In addition to the more thoughtful decisions the children made about the content of their work, there is evidence that they also achieved differences in the quality of their work in their second attempts. Whereas the number of staged photos remained the same in both sets, the number of non-staged photos increased from 23 to 36. And although the children could be seen as not making an effort to 'manipulate' their subject, it can also be said that they were somewhat freed from the constraints static objects impose. The photographic view they employed now broke away from the immediate environmental surroundings and from an almost homogenised, generalised view. Their output became more specific and more individualised: there are fewer photos of '2, 3 and more than 3

people' in the 'after' set (10 to 1, 6 to 2 and 8 to 6 respectively). In turn, the number of '1 person' photos increased from 25 to 37. More adults were photographed in the 'after' set, whilst the number of children photographed remained the same. But whereas many of the 'before' shots were of people, the after ones included objects as well. The children had come to realise that they could represent their environment not just by photographic people as the subjects of their photographs, but also through favourite - 'common', though still characteristic - objects. Through the experience of taking photos and the discussions that followed, they had started thinking differently about what photography can do and what the medium is for.

Next, the 'Technical Quality' category was examined. In all its sub-categories here (focus, camera shake, overexposed, underexposed) there was an increase in the number of photos taken in the 'after' set. Although that was the case in cardinal numbers, in percentage this increase was in line with the increase in the total number of 'after' photos taken, indicating that no measurable improvement was recorded in these sub-categories. In effect, the children made the same number of 'mistakes' both times. The only exception was the 'use of flash' sub-category. Here, a considerable improvement could be observed, as more than twice as many photos were taken with the use of flash in the 'after' set: 18 as opposed to 7. Probably the children had not realised in their earlier attempt how the flash operates or what it can actually do. Surprisingly, all the out-of-focus photos were of still objects/people rather than moving ones, as might have been expected; it bears noting however that there were very few photos with a moving object/person overall. It also bears noting that the 'after' set contained no photos with chopped bodies or objects, despite the fact that there were more close ups in the 'after' set - with close ups being more 'susceptible' to being chopped. Although it cannot be said that the children had fully mastered the possibilities of the

different framings as of yet, they were clearly beginning to demonstrate an awareness of the affordances of the photographic medium when they took their second set of photos.

Moving on to the 'Media Language' category that I introduced in the coding scheme in order to account for the specific moving image language dimensions, some more points can be made. Emerging evidence would suggest that the teaching strategies applied had some impact on the form of the children's photos taken.

It has been pointed out in other pieces of research examining media language categories that children often adopt 'default' framing and editing strategies in their productions (Burn, 2013). In the case of this study, a 'typical profile' of the photographs taken emerged to be a focused, eye-level, long shot taken in landscape position. This pattern was again repeated in both sets here. Nevertheless, a notable difference can be observed in the 'after' set. Although the number of photos in the 'medium shot', 'long shot', 'landscape' and 'eye-level' sub-categories remained the same or increased slightly in accordance with the overall increase of the 'after' photos, numbers in what it could be called the 'difficult' sub-categories (in the sense of breaking away from the framings that typically constitute the default mode as described above) of 'close up', 'portrait', 'low angle' and 'high angle' increased more significantly. Indeed, in some categories such as 'close up' and 'high angle', there were no photos taken in the 'before' set whereas in the 'after' set these have increased to 5 (close ups) and 3 (high angles) respectively. Equally, the number of 'portrait' photos was increased from 9 in the 'before' set to 22 in the 'after' set.

In conclusion, the comparison between the two sets of the photographs showed a modest but still qualitatively significant increase in framing structures which departed from the default eye-level, mid-shot type,

coupled with evidence of some specific decisions in relation to camera proximity and angle. This pattern indicates a change in the children's level and nature of media literacy. From a learning progression point of view, this modest increase could also suggest a necessary, in-between stage on the way to becoming 'photo-aware'.

At this stage of the project, and as the examination of the photos has shown, some change can also be seen in the content and the kinds of representations the children attempted in their photos and in how they presented aspects of their identity as a kind of dramatized performance of themselves and of their social world, in the manner that Goffman (1956) describes.

The children in this project photographed the immediate surroundings of the private and social world they inhabit. With regard to the social world in particular, this project also reflected the relative freedom they had to go out into their community, compared to children from other social settings: this town is still a relatively safe place for the children to wander, parents seem not to be too frightened or worried by the floating discourses of various kinds of danger concerning children and there are also still open spaces for the children to spend their free time and socialize. To be sure, this involvement with going out is reflected on the relative absence of references (as it emerges from their photos) on media and popular culture: there are not many photos of toys or media in any form (there was only one photo of a Gameboy console and a couple of photos of soft toys). Media as a pastime did not seem to play a central role in their lives compared to the 'going out' aspect, an issue that possibly differentiates these children and their communities from others in the country and other social contexts such as big cities. This important distinction impacted the media production the students created as part of this project.

In summary, it needs to be stressed that any changes between the two sets will also have to be traced to the way the children analysed the photos and how they talked about them in general. There was evidence then - as it will be shown again later in the sub-case studies of individual children - that the experience of taking photos the first time, the teaching that followed and the reflection on the process and the products alerted the children towards the affordances of the medium and made them begin to think differently about photographs. This dialectic process resulted in changes in the form and content of the students' photographs - as indicated above - as well as more sophisticated and elaborate descriptions of their work, in which they adopted terms that indicated a solidifying of framing actions and decisions into abstract concepts. I will be elaborating further on this dialectic between concept and practice later in the thesis.

5.4 Sub-case studies of individual children

5.4.1 Introduction to Sub-case Studies

In the preceding section, a semi-quantitative approach of the still photographs was followed in order to make an initial sense of them and draw some preliminary - albeit generic - conclusions. Here, a qualitative approach is applied, in the manner specified in the Methodology Chapter 4.

I have made the choice to present the data related to the production of still images in the form of individual sub-case studies for three participants in the activity. This form of organising, presenting and analysing the data appears to be the most apt one in answering my research questions, as case studies already contain a certain form of structure and allow for looking at each individual student in depth.

In this section therefore, I provide individual sub-case studies, one for each of three (out of four in total) children that completed both the 'before' and the 'after' set of photographs. These are:

- a. Giannis
- b. Renalnto
- c. Myrto

Within each case study, I consider each child as photographer, bringing also together elements about them which were not considered in the earlier analysis of the form and content of the photos. Also within each case study, selected, key vignettes will be looked at and examined. As the tasks for this set of activities were carried out by the young learners individually, and not in groups as they did in the video activity, I had the chance to look closer and in a more focused manner at the issues pertinent to the research questions of the thesis.

Each case study is comprised of two sections:

- the activities that took place around the production of the 'before' set of photos;
- the activities that took place around the production of the 'after' set of photos.

Each of the two sections is comprised of these kinds of data:

- visual data (the photos the children took)
- linguistic data (interviews as well as talking and discussions, naturally occurring during the course of the lessons)
- observational data

The above data (visual and linguistic) will be discussed in relation to three broad themes related to the research questions:

1. Media Literacy:

The focus here is on explicit comments on framing and composition. For the analysis of the still photos, the three social semiotic metafunctions framework described in the Methodology chapter (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Burn & Parker, 2003) was applied as it allowed me to trace the forms and organisational structures the learners created which relate to my research question about their level of media literacy.

2. Learning:

Here, we are interested not just in what the children have learned (compared to the 'before' stage) and can now do (or even simply express awareness of verbally) but primarily how they learned, how they arrived at that new learning, and what is the relationship between conceptual understanding and practice.

3. Identity:

Here, the content of the photos and the motivation for taking them is examined. Consideration will also be given into how the children represented themselves and their social world, as well as the kinds of sociocultural development and identity play that are in evidence.

As a reminder, the individual results of the coding scheme (Table 3) and the comparison between the two sets of photographs for the above three students (Tables 4, 5 and 6 respectively) can be found in Appendix A. A full list of the photographs mentioned but not presented in the sub-case studies can be found in Appendix B.

A note of clarification needs to be added at this point. The hybrid research design that has been followed in this thesis has generated data that could be characterised by a degree of unevenness in weighting and length, particularly among the sub-case studies just presented in the preceding sections: clearly, there is more data from some children than others and

more data of some type from some children than others. These inconsistencies in data presented and analysed can be attributed to a number of reasons.

Initially, it can be stated that qualitative research - which this thesis adheres to - by its very nature often produces organic, 'messy' (Clark et al., 2007) data which goes some way to explaining why the outcomes are uneven.

Secondly, the differences among the sub-cases also relate to the very fact of working with children and the principles guiding research with such groups. To be sure, this research has been informed by considerations which dictate that research with children entails a specific sense of sensitivity to the data gathering. Following Clark (2014: 204), I tried to "show respect and exercise sensitivity to how the children might express their willingness to continue to take part or to exercise 'informed dissent'". As such, I was dealing with them as and when the data emerged on the children's terms rather than trying to force some prescriptive agenda on them. This was matched by each child's character, abilities, and willingness to participate. Some of the participants had limited language skills, were shy or not very expressive or communicative - hence the small amount of data produced. Others, viewed the project and the interviews in particular as a performance, as an opportunity to perform different roles - hence the abundance of data. These facts explain again the differences in the data.

Finally, it needs to be pointed out that the group of children I worked with is an opportunity sample, as the after-school club had been established already before I arrived at the school and it was thus given to me. Therefore, I did not go through a purposive sampling process or recruit individuals with specific characteristics; it was rather a random group. As a result, some of the children stuck with the project more than others, while some others dropped out. This fact also explains some of the

unevenness in the data as this was subject to attrition and to the natural unevenness of children's cultural production.

5.4.2 Case Study 1: *Giannis*

Giannis comes from an Albanian immigrant family that came to Greece when he was a few years old. He comes from a working-class family and his father is a builder. He has a younger sister who attends the same school. He is a child who spends quite a lot of his time outside, unsupervised, as his parents work most of the time. He is one of the very few children who is not collected by an adult at the end of the school day and he even has keys for his house so that he can return on his own anytime. This aspect of his life is somehow depicted in the small number of indoor (i.e. home or school) photos he took compared to outdoor ones. Even the karate activity which he photographed extensively and which was staged in an indoor sports centre, was nonetheless part of an outing. During much of the project he was a peripheral figure turning up occasionally, and I had great difficulty persuading him to participate. Nevertheless, when present, and depending on the topic of the day, I observed that he would get excited by particular activities which would motivate him to contribute.

'Before photos'

Only 7 photos came out here, the lowest number among all children. The topics covered had to do with school and social environment.

He produced a balanced mixture of indoor and outdoor settings as well as males and females photographed - all of them children. On the media language side, there were five medium shots, two long shots and no close-ups. All photos were taken in landscape position and they were all at eye-level with the exception of one.



Figure 5.1: View from Giannis' balcony

Figure 5.1 is a photo taken from the balcony of Giannis' flat. As framing, it is looking angled down, but this is likely only because the photo was taken from a higher up floor in the building where he lives. This was the point at which Giannis happened to be standing and there seemed to be no intention of giving the photograph a particular dramatic meaning other than what it actually depicts. It shows a general view of the street outside the house where he lives and in that way we can get a sense of the kind of physical environment Giannis lives in: mainly old houses with the occasional block of offices. Giannis, as mentioned before, is relatively free to go out on his own and he quite often wanders in the streets. But, as emerged in our interview together, his goal was not so much about showing the outside of his house and the area he lives. Rather, he had been alerted by the noise of two motorcycles driving past his house with one of them riding on a single wheel. Motorcycles were Giannis' fascination and although he did not manage to capture the motorcycles while they were in front of his house, he did manage a shot of them as they had moved further down. Clearly, his interest in motorcycles and cars, as indicated, was his primary motivation for taking this picture. It is

the most accomplished in terms of composition and framing of all his 'before' photos, in the sense that there are not chopped parts, although with such a wide angle and a long distance it would have been difficult to miss his subject anyway. But although understandably it was an 'instant' photo taken in a hurry and with little time for any consideration, strictly speaking the salient objects for him (the two motorcycles) are not easily inferred as such, judging from the place they occupy in the composition.

'After photos'

29 photos were successfully taken here compared to only 7 at the 'before' stage, suggesting already some significant developments in a number of regards. For starters, although the assignment was for 12 photos to be taken, Giannis demonstrated greater enthusiasm in this second attempt simply by the fact that he took more than twice as many photos as assigned.

A greater variety of themes appeared in this set, marking thus another important development. Although the subject of sports prevails, there were also photographs documenting family, social environment and personal objects. The increased number of photos taken allowed for a series of 'concept' photos to be taken around a single theme: 22 out of the 29 were about a sporting event that Giannis participated in (karate). Within those photos, we observe additional clusters of two or three very similar pictures in terms of subject matter and framing around a particular topic or person. Some of these groups of photos at the karate event (for instance photos no. 8, 9, 10 and 19, 20, 21 - in the Appendix B1) appear to try and capture a sequence of action, resembling to some extent a movie storyboard.

Interestingly enough, as karate consists of a frequent series of short 'pauses' in between the action (especially in an exhibition show like the

one depicted here, in which no actual games were played) this kind of freeze-frame of the movements is very appropriate. Possibly, although the pictures of the karate subset are of the 'memento' type, considered as a whole they mark a shift in the way the function of the photography is now perceived by Giannis: a series of photos can tell a story; the photos are inscriptions of key moments which when laid down can re-narrate the events. We can interpret this as a move towards photomontage and the more developed process of editing. Similar juxtapositions of images that taken together present the unfolding of a narrative, will also be noted in the cases of the other children later.

The 'after' photos also appear to be of better technical quality compared to the 'before' set: no underexposed or overexposed ones, no blurred ones. From a media language point of view, photos here are more appropriately framed, with no chopped bits (although in a couple of them you can see Giannis' fingers in the frame as he was taking the picture). The vast majority of them are long shots with some medium shots but no close ups at all yet again. An interesting new element that appeared in Giannis' 'after' photos (compared to the 'before' photos) is a nice balance of landscape and portrait photos this time, although they are all still composed at eye-level (with an exception of one low angle one: photo no. 30, in Appendix B1).

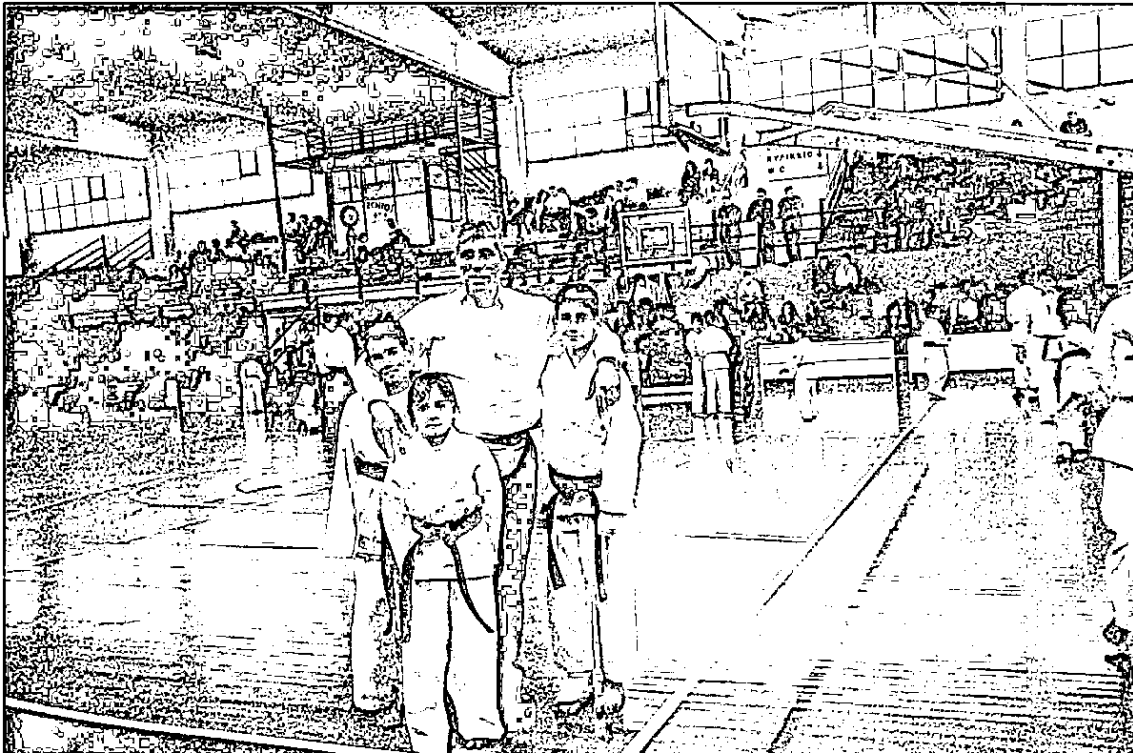


Figure 5.2: Karate instructor and his students

Figure 5.2 is one of 23 photos Giannis took of the karate games he participated in (out of the 27 available shots in the camera). As stated already, karate is an important aspect of his life. This photo depicts the team's coach with three of the children athletes. The boy on the left is Giannis' best mate of the group who was also the subject of Giannis' photo of another occasion as well (photo no. 30, in Appendix B1). The karate coach embraces the children in a quite fatherly manner and as Giannis shared in his interview, he is an inspirational figure, a kind of mentor. The picture is framed in a long shot which allows a lot of the background in the composition. Though a portion of that might have been useful in giving us an idea of the place, it ended up containing too much unnecessary information. The main figures Giannis wanted to capture are in the centre of the picture but the presence of other elements such as people and space can be distracting.



Figure 5.3: Motorcycle parked

Although there is possibly nothing special about this picture in Figure 5.3 of a motorcycle as a subject, textually it is the most accomplished in terms of getting the composition and framing right. Giannis had a particular fascination with motorcycles and cars. He took no pictures of toys for instance - unlike other children, especially Myrto - other than his bicycle (photo no. 35, in Appendix B1) which for him is still a 'machine' and indeed a moving one. That interest can also be seen in photos no. 1 & no. 4 (both in Appendix B1) from the 'before' set where two cars are appearing again. It is interesting to note though that those two pictures showed only a small part of the car and the framing was not the most appropriate for the occasion and the theme depicted. In this motorcycle shot however, Giannis achieves a very tight framing with the subject occupying the whole space of the photograph from side to side. The attention to composition Giannis gave this photo may very well signify the prominence and value this object holds for him. The flash was reflected right at the engine of the motorcycle making it shine and enhancing thus

its prominence. There is little doubt that this motorcycle holds a particular attraction for Giannis.



Figure 5.4: Painting in Giannis' home

The photo in Figure 5.4 shows a painting hanging on a wall in Giannis' home and one could easily assume that this is the main subject given its centrality, the size and the prominence. Despite this, in the interview we had, Giannis revealed that he had wanted to take a picture of the medal which was hanging from the painting and which he had won in a karate game. This is an example (and there were others as well) where the photographer's own interest for a particular object led him to ignore the possibility that other elements present in the composition could be thought of as more prominent by another viewer.

Giannis' photos suggest a number of points related to the display of various kinds of dramatizations and performance of identity, as Goffman (1956) describes. He probably considers himself 'too much of a boy' to bring himself down to play games with other pupils in the school. In fact, he had been a quite isolated, peripheral figure, minding his own business throughout the project. He seemed more interested in exploring issues by (and regarding) himself rather than mixing and socializing with the children of his class year or age in the project. In one of the interviews, he revealed that he wanders in the streets a lot and his closest people were his older cousin and his cousin's friends, all of them older than him.

Through examining the above series of photos and the content they reveal, we can suggest that this appears to exemplify the idea of performativity in relation to gender in the way that Butler (1999) describes it: Giannis is constructing masculinity through his performance of himself and the various kind of vehicles he photographs. To be sure, the motorbikes and cars appearing in his photos are "the materials he deploys as a resource with which to construct a gendered subjectivity" (Pelletier, 2007: 129). These objects are indeed his stock of materials that are repeated in his representations and the related actions he takes. We are observing here therefore that "gender appears to be a sequence of acts ... a 'doing' rather than a state of 'being'" (Salih, 2002: 62). Butler further elaborates this idea stating that:

Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being (Butler, 1999: 33).

As such, Giannis taking pictures of himself with motorbikes, forms the kind of (repeated) acts which Butler argues that congeal over time into a sort of performance of gender. Moreover, it needs to be pointed out that

he is doing this not because *he is* a boy but because he wishes to identify himself as such through identifying with what conventional societal norms conceive of or define as masculine traits and objects - in this case fast cars and motorbikes - as Pelletier (2007) has also concluded in examining similar acts of identity performance among young people.

There is another aspect to Giannis' photos I would like to focus some attention to – the element of observer vs participant. Being situated in a small town, I would sometimes have chance interactions with the children outside of the school setting. This gave me opportunities to witness aspects of the children not immediately visible in school. In my observations of the children outside school, I met Giannis in the streets several times during the course of this project. Most of the time he was on his bicycle with another couple of boys, older than him. His only relatively close companion in school was Renalnto, the other Albanian boy, although their relation is quite nebulous and twisted, a kind of love and hate relationship: they would ask for each other when not present but when got together they would often get involved in some kind of argument or criticism of each other. Giannis is of Albanian background as well but I never heard him speaking the language with the other Albanian-origin children in the school, including his own sister and Renalnto, although I was told that he spoke it at home. In fact, it was not until the last day of the project that I found out that he was Albanian and that was through his school records where an Albanian town was indicated as his place of birth. When I asked him about his ethnic background, he simply confirmed it without any further comments. Possibly, Giannis has been almost fully assimilated into the Greek way of life or felt embarrassed to reveal his ethnic origin, as is often the case with children of ethnic (particularly Albanian) background in Greece.

I wonder if the photography activity was for him a way to represent his immediate, personal interests and maybe 'prove' a point about his status or perhaps an aspiration that he might like to achieve. One can find evidence for this not so much through the activity itself - there was no play or major interaction with other people and the vast majority of his photos were taken from a distance - but rather through the actual result, the photos themselves. I mention this anecdote also because, in contrast to other children's photos where one could see their involvement somewhere in the picture even if they were not depicted themselves, in his photos Giannis is more of an observer, an outsider.

To consider what Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) term orientational level, it appears that the intended audience of his photos are not his classmates but his karate peer group. As mentioned, karate is an important element of his peer group culture and Giannis has spent most of his 'after' photos on a karate show he participated (23 out of the 29 photos). He likes competitive sports, and he watches violent films on television and video late at night, as he admitted in one of the interviews held with him. Clearly the involvement with karate is a status endeavour for him. That can be seen particularly in the photos where he poses himself, such as the photo in Figure 5.5:



Figure 5.5: Giannis posing at the stadium

Here, Giannis is performing and adopting a certain kind of pose for the camera, taking a straight, serious look, an exaggerated pose of a super karate kid with raised arms and inflated muscles. This is very much the performance of a macho identity. To be sure, as I will argue in Chapter 6 in relation to the film-making project, the children's representation of themselves constitutes a dramatic performance of aspects of identity, actual or aspirational, so that the composition of the media image extends beyond framing and composition into the use of dramatic modes: action, posture, gesture, language.

Of the 25 photos showing people, only one shows an adult (though still with children): the karate instructor (Figure 5.2). All other pictures feature only children. His world does not involve adults and even his parents (a common theme in other children's photographs) do not appear on any of his photo. He seems to be pursuing the status mentioned above through his karate group.

His school achievement and overall academic performance was very low as shown in his grades and confirmed by his teacher in the interview I had with him. His disenchantment with school can probably be traced to his only two photos of school which are poorly-thought planned and executed, out of focus, and seemed almost forced, as if expressing that he was taking the photos only out of duty to the assignment (photo no. 2 & photo no. 6 - both in Appendix B1). While this could be explained as being coincidental, it may also indicate that he cared less when photographing this subject, as if school does not inspire his attention. Similarly, he did not look up to his teachers, nor did he seem particularly motivated to aspire towards academic achievement. The value he placed on being with an older peer group, and his fascination with cars and motorcycles (it can be noted that his father was a mechanic) points to a strategy he may have developed for compensating for his lack of success in school by finding areas of success and status outside this domain.

Giannis' photos also provide evidence of aspects of media literacy. In relation to the media language, there is an interesting question that arose whilst examining these photographs. As observed, Giannis has a close relationship with the members of his karate circle. But if, as Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) have noted, close up framing implies intimacy, social proximity and familiarity and frontal angle signifies identification with the represented participants, why hasn't Giannis taken any close ups of those people? The answer might be related to his own personality and it might also be an issue related to gender. In this case, we can clearly observe how issues of media literacy relate to issues of identity (Burn & Durran, 2007). Although on the level of media literacy it could be argued that using close ups implies a degree of visual literacy at the textual level, it could also be argued that on the identity level it implies a kind of intimacy with the subjects which boys may possibly find more difficult to express. Giannis' 'tough boy' identity in particular seemed to have an effect on the

kind of framing he used and this reflected his stance of not wanting to appear too sentimental. This observation about the lack of close ups leads one to make another assumption: that despite any desire to express intimacy, the practicalities, but more importantly the psychological aspects of it, are more difficult to manage and more complicated. Maybe, despite the social proximity, going close to a person or object is not something that occurs naturally. The children still have to learn the codes and the conventions of both the media language but also those of the social etiquette. On the other hand, it might be an entirely different set of priorities resulting in different perceptions of the intimacy: the children tried to include general views of their friends and their surrounding that encompass everything as they didn't want to lose any details.

Initially, this playful approach to karate and other masculine identities exhibited, made available to Giannis through his culture and fascination with combative sports, constitutes a form of improvisation in Goffman's terms and can also be explained as a form of 'masculine melodrama' (Collier, 2015). In that sense, masculinities are enacted through playful performances based on popular 'hypermasculine' (Collier, 2015) cultural forms.

At the same time, the observations made above lead us also to speculate that Giannis' photographic representations are an instance of what could be thought of as performance of 'tough boy' - and even 'hard-core boy' (Soep (2005) boyhood identity. Soep (2005: 182) defines hard-core-ness as "a property of individual characters maintained by ... the systematic elimination of weakness".

In a piece of research concerning gender identity in early childhood, Daitsman (2011) has found that whereas girls are more likely to cross traditional gender role boundaries by doing things not commonly associated with 'male' traits, boys adhere more closely to these 'tough'

masculine roles. Solomon (2016), explicating the above statement, says that “some researchers believe this phenomenon results from our male-dominated culture, in which being male or having male characteristics is associated with power, opportunity, and prestige” (Solomon, 2016: 63). She goes on to add that “Many young boys demonstrate a much more heightened awareness of these desirable qualities and perhaps worry about losing such advantages if they were to cross gender lines” (Solomon, 2016: 63). This fact offers possibly an explanation as to why boys appear more ‘firm’ in their gender representations, more ‘rigid’, resulting thus in tougher forms of masculinity. In essence, such a position constitutes a strong and affirmative ‘attempt’ to firmly exclude other possible gender positions.

Clearly, the performative aspects that Butler discusses are also present here. Richards (2012) reminds us that in Butler’s theoretical sketch, the production of gender-differentiated bodies (that is, the different actions that different genders perform), is a matter of repeated performance and fabrication. As such, Giannis’ performance of hard-core boyhood through his affiliation with combative sports and the adoption and repetition of perceived male body postures consolidate over time his sense of gender.

Continuing on the issue of media language, it seems that many of Giannis’ photos were snap shots and opportunistic and he was often driven by his immediate desire to depict what had caught his attention at the moment – although, clearly, his subjects in most cases were not arbitrary choices but coming from among the array of his interests. It appears that as soon as something caught his attention at a particular moment, he would capture a picture of it. He did not notice particularly the surroundings and the insertion of extraneous elements into his frame. All that he ‘could see’ is what he regarded as the most significant thing in the picture, usually a person. Additionally, and as a result of the above

'urgency', quite often the background in his photos bears little relevance to the main subject.



Figure 5.6: A karate athlete

In Figure 5.6, for instance, the salient subject was supposed to be the boy posing. But the inclusion of the other people sitting at the back as well as the sign on the background makes it more difficult for the main subject of the photo to achieve the desired impact.



Figure 5.7: The karate trophies

In Figure 5.7, Giannis could have moved closer to avoid including peoples' backs in the frame, given that his salient subject is just the karate trophies.

To conclude, from a media literacy point of view, although a lot of what Giannis does seem intended - both in terms of identity and representation as well as semiotic work - at the same time there appears to be an element of naïve photography in relation to the above and a sense in which he is not thinking consistently about framing and composition. He is thinking rather more about the subject matters of the photographs, being people or material objects. As such, for him the issue is not so much the photo as a thing in itself but rather what it is a photo of, the intended subject of the photo, its content and the personal investment and value he has attributed to it. In it, we can observe yet again the many and varied interrelations between media literacy and identity.

In terms of learning, any improvement occurred for Giannis can be attributed mainly to repetition: the fact that he had to repeat the task several times appeared to be the means through which Giannis made progress. Regarding this progress, although this was a moderate one, it still signalled a significant improvement for him, considering the level of knowledge around photography he began the project with – as evidenced in the talking and the ‘before’ photos. Giannis engaged in reflectional discussions in the classroom and he developed his metalinguistic skills, being able at times to use specific terms to describe particularly the different kinds of frames in ways that he had not done previously. More often than the other children, though, he would mix terms up and regress to longer grammatical formations in a lexical sparse manner (Halliday, 1989). In that sense, these formations and the fact that his verbal descriptions were not always matched by his photos, reveal that his concept development remained largely on the level of pseudoconcepts, as Vygotsky (1986) describes them. In that sense, definitions were quite ‘localised’ and formed more or less on the basis of common features rather than as a result of a logical operation of abstraction (Linask, 2019).

On this note, it needs to be pointed that repetition, and therefore growth, was inspired in large part by Giannis’ increase of emotional investment into the project, as his perception of its relevance to the expression of his identity and emotional world increased. Repetition alone, without emotional investment, may not have led to measurable growth.

Finally, it seems that there is a lot of identity work being done on the part of Giannis, concerning particularly self-representation and performance and his photos reveal that. For him, there is a certain performance of ‘boyhood’ at work and this is manifested through the kind of photos he is taking. He is in an ongoing process of expressing but also exploring his identity as he is experimenting with different forms and options. His

version of 'boyhood', nonetheless, is very much forward-looking into the future as he is also interested in pursuing adult roles both in terms of future professions, such as being a mechanic, but also in terms of hobbies such as his attraction to motorcycles. His father has obviously been a major influence in the way that his own preoccupations have been carried down to Giannis. He is also identifying with a martial art activity and the people who participate in that. Through his photographs he is putting together his own narrative of self, he is making statements about his affiliation with particular people and he is looking to form and carry over onto to other people certain impressions about himself (Goffman, 1956) and gain thus status that will look acceptable in the eyes of these 'significant others'.

Overall, it appears therefore that the compositional effort in Giannis' photographs is directed towards the representation of self, social world and cultural aspirations. The composition, while it displays modest development in framing, shows that the construction of media images needs to be considered not only in relation to the work of the camera, but in relation to the dramatic modes: posture, gesture, action, and associated contributory modes such as dress. I will return to the implications of this extended consideration of modes and media in Chapter 7.

5.4.3 Case Study 2: Renalnto

Renalnto is also an immigrant Albanian boy. He came to Greece when a couple of years old with his mother while his father stayed in Albania (not clear if he is still together with mother). He has two younger brothers and attends Year 4 although he is 11 years old and officially should be attending Year 6. But because of his initial low language ability he was placed in a lower Year - a common practice in the way Greek education system deals with these types of cases. He speaks Albanian at home

although, as he admitted in an interview, he cannot read or write it. His knowledge of the Greek language is at a decent communicative level now as well, although occasionally 'fragmented' or not always articulate. Often, he would leave sentences incomplete without always arriving at a clear conclusion, whilst he was sometimes making unexpected combinations of reasoning. This could be explained by his apparent indecision on issues, which would come across also in his language use. Nevertheless, it remains a question whether he would have had similar issues with Albanian language or if it was something that had to do more with Greek language. That aside, he is a very sensitive, affectionate and kind-hearted child, though occasionally 'mischievous' in school. This is maybe not surprising, given the kind of disenchanted relationship he has with school. I believe that the photos in Figure 5.8 and Figure 5.9, taken by a friend of his, give a very good impression of Renalnto and his personality.



Figure 5.8: Renalnto posing



Figure 5.9: Renalnto posing

Figure 5.8 and Figure 5.9 could be contrasted with Figure 5.5 above and photo no. 33 (in Appendix B1) of Giannis in his karate macho posing. Renalnto, on the contrary, takes a posing that is 'natural' and non-exaggerated, without adopting a particular persona. He is a smiley, 'light', boy.

In the two sets of photos taken, the following subsets with a common theme-narrative can be identified.

In the 'before' group:

- 12 were a sport activity: 10 football and 2 basketball
- 11 were about family/close friends and living environment
- 2 were about school life

In the 'after' group:

- 4 were on nature
- 4 were about friends
- 5 were on the surroundings / build environment
- 2 were about school life

The 'before' photos

I have chosen to discuss four photos here, 76, 77, 78 and 79, as representatives of the group of photos taken.

They are part of a group of 12 pictures which put together tell the story of a football match by capturing key moments of the game. They have been taken one after the other as a sequence with no interruptions from other photos in between. Of course, this is only a game between two, occasionally three players, but even in this condensed form it encapsulates quite graphically what a football game involves, containing the full repertoire of the game: a lot of running and actual game scenes, celebration scenes, techniques in the form of 'exhibition' of fancy tricks, scenes in front of the goalposts including goalkeeper's saves and – continuing the theme of football in the 'after' set as well – even football-related graffiti. All this reveals that Renalnto has a good knowledge of the game and its rituals, being himself an avid football player.

To consider the ideational or representational level (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), these four pictures are narrative images in the sense that taken together - but also individually - tell a story. The story is that of a football game with all its phases. There are the two oppositional teams - although in this case, the teams are simply in the form of two boys playing against each other - the football ground again in the form of the school playground, the goalposts (real on one side, made of two rubbish bins on the other) and the supporters that celebrate with the players. But even with the individual photos, it is not difficult to see the narrative and to

imagine what might have happened before and after each photo, not least because they are full of action, although 'frozen'. What goes missing in one photo – since stills can only include a fragment of the whole action – gets picked up in the next photo or further down so that we eventually get an almost complete picture of the entire action. On the other hand, it should be noted that in the way they were taken, the pictures here do not present a strictly linear progression of the game: as in a real game, anything that happens between the kick off and the final whistle could happen in any order really. Football, as a game on the pitch, is comprised of usually short 'scenes' that are similar in structure and which are interrupted frequently.

These repetitive scenes, regardless of whether they lead to a goal or not, take place all the time, which is precisely what these photos depict here: moments of a game that could have happened in any stage and with any order.



Figure 5.10: Football game scene

Figure 5.10 shows a boy overcoming his opponent and heading towards the goalpost.



Figure 5.11: Football game scene

Figure 5.11 shows a trick one of the boys performs as he attempts to kick the ball with a different foot to the one he initially intended and deceive thus his opponent by passing the ball between the opponent's stretched legs. This photo is one of Renalnto's favourite:

KV: Why this photo?

RENALNTO: Because you can see him doing a trick

As is the case with many other similar instances, though, Renalnto chooses this picture on the basis of its subject and the importance this has for him, rather than any photographic qualities of the picture.



Figure 5.12: Football game scene

Figure 5.12 could have just preceded Figure 5.10 in reality as it shows a player trying to bypass his opponent who is standing in front of him.



Figure 5.13: Football game scene

Figure 5.13 is a scene of celebration between players and fans after scoring a goal. The open mouths of two of the children who are supposedly chanting and the movement of the boy on the left (resulting in being slightly out of focus), make this picture more vivid. As noted above, with any one of these pictures, it is easy to see what might have happened before and after they were taken and how they might link with each other.

On a different level, though, apart from telling the story of an event - a football game – these photos are also, at the same time, telling the story of the specific group of people who appear in the photos. This group of children meet in this place quite regularly to play their favourite game. They are a small but dedicated group with the two younger boys being Renalnto's brothers. So, they are the 'real' protagonists of this narrative in the sense that they play themselves and they re-enact for the camera something familiar to them and something they themselves do all the time, in the sense of the repeated rituals that Goffman (1956) describes. It is interesting to note also that Renalnto, the photographer, clearly portrays himself in the photos as a member of this team and not an outsider. This can be seen in the picture no. 82 and picture no. 85 (both in Appendix B2) where he has been photographed by his friends playing football himself. He knows the people and he knows the routines they perform.

The location of the photos is a further point of consideration. The game is staged in a nearby secondary school's playground. Though a predominantly educational setting, this spot is used by the group of children as a recreational area and this is a common practice in places with limited proper sporting facilities, as in this town here. The terrain with its lines drawn on the concrete surface provides an ideal substitute for a football ground. The background though is quite insignificant when it

comes to the actual game and from that point of view the same applies to the photographs taken: it does not matter whether there are houses or the school itself in the background of the football scenes, and they do not 'interfere' with what is happening in the foreground. By implication, we also get a good idea of the surroundings and the locations the children use for their games in built-up areas and the kind of lived environment they inhabit.

Although all photos are staged, in the sense that the football game was set up in order to be photographed and the players know that, Renalnto has constructed very carefully this narrative both in terms of content as well as form: everything the game involves is there and the scenes are quite realistic looking-like. This is a result of the knowledge of the game that Renalnto possesses and it would not be inappropriate to suggest that the advanced knowledge of a subject the children may possess, increases the possibility for a more 'appropriate' representation of it – through the medium of photography in this case. As a consequence, Renalnto also demonstrates an incredible aptitude for capturing the moments. Though 'frozen' and staged, the photos are quite vivid and maintain within them the elements of action. This is largely achieved by capturing people at the right postures as they play. Once again, as in Giannis's photos earlier, we can see the aspiration towards photomontage or even moving image. Equally, we can once again observe the contribution of 'contributory modes' (Burn, 2013), in particular the dramatic nature of the composition. Of particular note in relation to this, is Figure 5.12 with the postures of the two boys. On the right, the boy is caught with one foot in the air where on the left the boy has been captured standing on his toes while his arms are stretched out, a position that must have only lasted few seconds. The inevitable blurring of the moving parts (see also the boy's left foot in Figure 5.11) intensifies this effect of action.

On the interpersonal level (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), the interesting question would be to identify whether the children construct the images so that they can communicate with an audience or to see whether they just take them for themselves.

In terms of media literacy, all the photos examined here were taken from an eye-level position and they are either medium or long shots. There are no close ups, indicating that there was not a particular audience in mind when these photos were taken. Renalnto does not intend to direct anybody's attention to anything in particular. These are 'souvenir' type of photos and they have only been taken for use by his classmates and for the project set by the teacher – and of course his friends and teammates. Shot distance and proximity are affordances Renalnto did not consider or use.

On the organisational level (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), although there may not be always discernible distinctions between the foreground and background in all images, the more interesting issue is whether the children actually construct a foreground and background or is it just an accident.

In all four pictures above, foreground images are the intentional ones (the children who play), whereas the background items are accidental, they just happened to be there (the school and the houses). In this sense, their presence does not alter the meaning of the photograph, nor is the viewer's attention likely to get side-tracked on the background as the foreground is so prominent and powerful with the action it entails and almost impossible to be missed or confused with any other background details. Therefore, the photographer appears to have made no particular effort to remove this background from his composition as he intuitively understands the above rules.

Other than that, composition is quite careful and in all photos the foreground elements (the children) are well placed in the centre, often covering the whole space of the photograph from side to side making thus a big statement about their importance. Even if it is accidental - in the sense that the photographer has not consciously decided to spread his subjects across the whole photograph - it is still indicative of the importance the persons involved hold for the photographer. This is not simply a football game but a football game between specific people. It is possible, however, that this might not be a deliberate decision. It is very likely that what the children 'see' when they look through the viewfinder is not so much objects or people as such but rather 'important volumes' which attract their attention and occupy a certain space.

The 'after' photos



Figure 5.14: A boy stealing medlars

This photo (Figure 5.14) has been taken from behind a wall and it captures a boy who, unaware of the presence of the photographer, is attempting to steal medlars from a tree. In the coding scheme used (Sharples et al, 2003), I coded this photo as 'exhibition quality' mainly because of the wall that runs across the photograph dividing it into two parts. This wall-line cuts also the boy's body almost in two: it appears almost like a metaphor, as though he is being caught between a good and evil decision, a moment of hesitation: should he steal or not? This line expresses in the photo the sense of (literally!) 'forbidden fruit'. The colour tones are also interesting: the line can be said to separate the dark underworld from the bright heaven. The picture is quite vivid and it seems like a still from a movie, like frozen action. There is a moment of tension where anything could happen. The unravelling of the scene would have the camera being raised gradually up from behind the wall to reveal the subject. All the action is taking place on the background which Renalnto has included very carefully. Although it was not pre-arranged in any particular way, all its elements such as the wall, the boy and the tree, have been placed appropriately to convey the meaning intended. Unlike most of the other photos, this one is not staged as the (still unaware) protagonist, the boy, is not looking at the camera.

If these are the points the researcher makes, Renalnto himself had a different agenda all together when he took this picture:

KV: Do you like this photo?

RENALNTO: This? Yes

KV: Why?

RENALNTO: Because... for the others to understand what he eats

And further down:

KV: Does this obstacle [the wall] not bother you?

RENALNTO: It's not an obstacle... I took this picture without looking through the viewfinder. I was waiting for someone to go past.

If we think about the pictures as ideational (Burn, 2003), the idea the children are representing is that it is themselves, 'who we are'. They are showing a slice of the activities which are done by them on a regular basis. In social semiotic terms, therefore, the primary motivation, the social interest behind this - leaving aside for a moment the fact that it was the teacher that initially asked them to take a series of photos - is to say something about themselves and their world.

There is a clear motivation then that relates to their sense of self, their cultural experience and their social location. This observation complies with the findings of long tradition in the analysis of children media work: whatever the children make a media text about, in a sense it is always about themselves, their preoccupations and their view of the world. In the case of the photographs here, this is apparent in a quite explicit way. Renalnto's main themes are 'football' and 'family - friendship'. These are the issues he feels passionate about and they are all clearly depicted in his photos.

The photos of the 'family' and 'friendship' issues are particularly telling, if not for their photographic qualities, certainly for their content and what they say about the people depicted and Renalnto's relationship with them (Figure 5.15, Figure 5.16, Figure 5.17, Figure 5.18 and Figure 5.19).

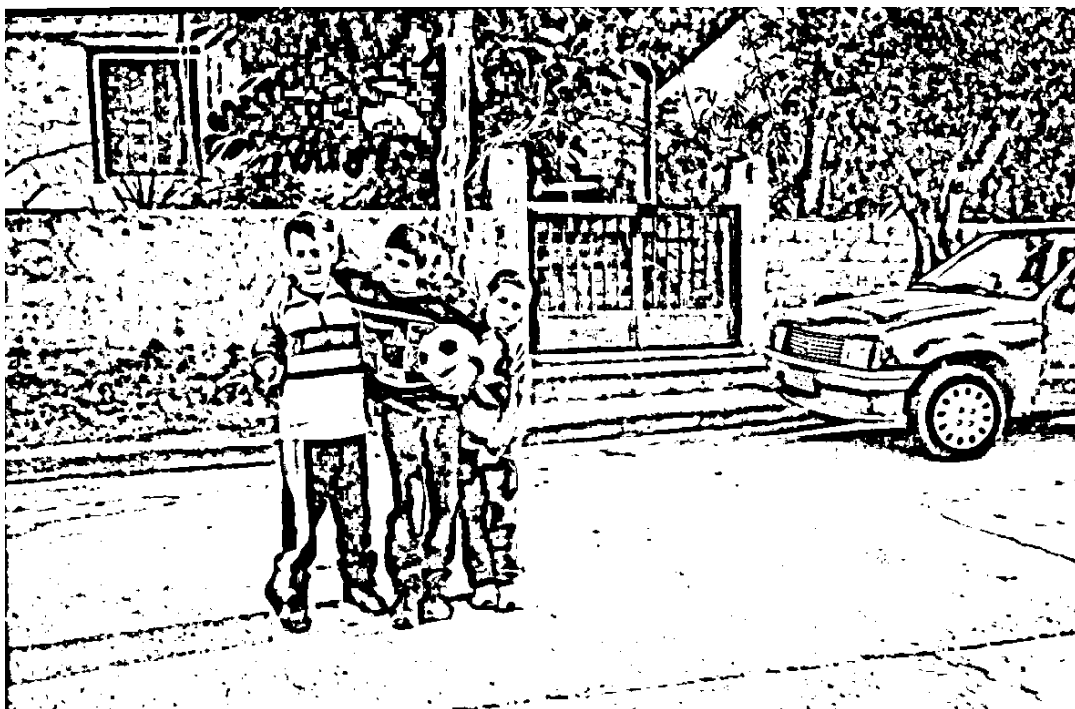


Figure 5.15: Renalnto's friends posing



Figure 5.16: Renalnto's friends posing



Figure 5.17: Renalnto's friends posing



Figure 5.18: Renalnto's friends posing



Figure 5.19: Renalnto's younger brother

Renalnto's friends are the humble, the 'everyday', the excluded in various ways, and the 'small' from all aspects (age, status, class, physically) [the boy in the green shirt on photo no. 91 has mild special needs]. These representations can be compared with photos of similar theme, taken by some of the other children in the project: for example, Figure 5.20, taken by Myrto, and Figure 5.21, taken by Stella: the group of five, uniformed, black, 'big, athletic boys - a proper team - and the three football-shirted, macho posers.



Figure 5.20: The school's boys volleyball team



Figure 5.21: Football players posing

Of course, these are older boys, therefore they are bound to behave and pose differently but the point is about the kind of people each one of the photographers' attention and interest is attracted by and mixes with anyway. In my observations of him outside school, I never saw Renalnto mixing with these other groups of children, outside his own intimate circle.

There is also something very sweet (if not bordering to naïve – in a positive sense of the word) about the people photographed which Renalnto achieved in a very affectionate way. See for example Figure 5.19: the boy with the apple and his innocent look. There are also many photos where the children are hugging each other. Even football (and

sport in general) is depicted in its loving, gang-like, fun dimension and not as a competitive sport in the way Giannis did with his karate photos or the photo of the three footballer boys above.

Renalnto is equally fond of his two younger brothers as revealed by the number of photos he took of them, both at the sporting pitch as well as around his home (photos no. 92, 94, 96, 97, 99 – in Appendix B2). Again, the way they look on the photos is unpretentious and sweet.

Renalnto also loves nature and he took more 'nature' photos than anybody else in the project (Figure 5.14, as well as photo no. 108, photo no. 120, photo no. 122, photo no. 124 - in Appendix B2). He was the only one to get so close to nature and that resulted in a number of close-ups capturing details which, again, was something that the other children were mostly not able to exhibit. One wonders if that was a residue from his upbringing in the Albanian countryside. Interestingly, all his 'Nature' photographs were taken in the 'after' set, suggesting that he had come to realise in some way that photos, other than people, can also be used for depicting the surrounding world: this was a major development that occurred between the first and the second set. In general, his 'outdoors' photos outnumber the 'indoors' ones by far (40 and 7 respectively). Renalnto is a boy who spends a lot of his time outside, wandering the streets, as his mother worked long hours, as revealed in our interview.

KV: Is that near your house?

RENALNTO: Oh no, very far

KV: How did you get there?

RENALNTO: I was walking, just like that... to find something good to photograph. And I got to the top and I captured it

Another issue relates to school. Of his 47 photos in total, only four were taken in his school - two in each set. (Although the main football scenes were taken in another nearby secondary school playground, this can be

thought of as an entertainment space rather than an educational setting: the playground is much bigger there). All four photos are set in the playground and three of the four depict children playing football. That in itself probably tells us something about how he views school and what happens there. Clearly, there was a level of disenchantment with school which was also later confirmed by his class teacher during the interview held with him.

In these sets of photos, the content element is the prominence of footballers. In these cases, there is an argument that the young people are constructing gender identity through playful performance. Sutton-Smith (1997) reminds us that play is a matter of learning to cope with the emotional challenges of growing up into a difficult world.

Here, the performative aspect that Butler proposes takes the form of sport, in particular football. Bowley (2013: 87), drawing on Swain (2006) and Bhana (2008), argues that "Sport is not simply a pastime, something recreational and fun, but is often the place where dominant masculinities are produced and relations of domination and subordination are constructed".

Young people here construct masculinity through their involvement with sport – whether real or staged. They identify again with a domain that is traditionally considered primarily a preserve for boys – although less and less so. Indeed, as Bowley (2013: 88) contends: "Arguably when doing sport, boys purposefully and willingly negotiate their masculinity and their heterosexuality". The boys therefore "are inscribed within discourses of heterosexuality as they 'do boy' through their sport" (Renold, 2007: 278). 'Doing' sport is doing masculinity and contributes to understanding many boys' obsession with sport.

It is also important to note that, as Richards (2012: 381) observes, "for many boys playing football provides an opportunity to act as if being

watched by an audience of many millions. In doing so, they are participating in and performing a kind of public masculinity”.

Returning to Butler’s idea of performativity, as earlier above, we can detect how the repetition of the football actions congeal over time into a performance of gender.

It is also worth noting that there are no girls in any of his photos, with the exception of photo no. 103 (in Appendix B2) which, in any case, appears to be accidental - the girl appears to just happen to be there in the background. Renalnto’s overall shyness may have also contributed to his apparent lack of interest in including girls in his photos.

Here, a rather different theme is in evidence, that of relations between genders. Renalnto is indeed a very shy boy, to the extent that he could be termed as ‘softie’ (Bowley, 2013) - as his photos of nature but also of his friends and his neighbourhood expressively reveal. This reads very much like a contradiction: on the one hand there is an abundance of football photographs, a primarily ‘masculine’ sport. And, although, himself not the most avid footballer, he is nevertheless being depicted here as full of confidence in his performance of sporting ability. On the other hand, there is a clear performance of a shy young boy, mostly in his nature photographs, almost detached from manifestations of overt masculinity.

In all of this, it is very likely that he is performing a kind of football identity almost as a kind of camouflage for a more intimate and sentimental identity that is manifested in the collegiate and non competitive nature of the football photos but also through his shyness with girls. Renalnto is possibly using these resources for a performance which also functions as a defence mechanism: sometimes it might be about confidence; other times it might be more about lack of confidence.

To conclude this section, Renalnto’s photographs manifest the fluidity of identities. Identities, far from being stable, physical ‘facts’ of existence,

are taken on and assumed as and when, resulting often in seemingly contradictory manifestations of them, when looked at from the outside.

Renalnto seemed also interested in representing not only the people but also the conditions of their living. In fact, most of the time, the people depicted in his photos were not in a 'neutral' spot but rather embedded firmly within their environment. The social environment for Renalnto was the inner-city. We can see the concrete blocks, the narrow space between the blocks of flats where these families live and the buildings behind the football/school scenes. In this way, Renalnto makes a strong visual statement about living conditions, most likely not consciously but nonetheless clearly expressing the world he was surrounded by daily, which was determined pretty much by his social class. The area of the town where he lived in was inhabited mostly by working class people. Here, it is worth comparing the derelict houses of his neighbourhood (photos no. 116, no. 121, no. 123, no. 127, no. 128 – in Appendix B2) with the luxurious houses of the two girls' (Myrto: Fig. 5.24 [in Myrto's case study photographs below] and photo no. 57 [in Appendix B3], and Anna: photo no. 119 [in Appendix B4]) as well as Aris' home interior (photo no. 187 – in Appendix B4), with all three children coming from wealthy, middle-class families. Moreover, perhaps the changes of places and the sense of 'temporality' he has experienced may have sensitized him in depicting the built environment as well as the natural environment in ways that none of the other children has done. Despite the gloomy nature of picture no. 116 [in Appendix B2], there is an optimistic note in it: from within the dark buildings a glimpse of light emerges, alluding to the possibility of a better, brighter life that peeps out from the back.

Another point regarding Renalnto has to do with his language ability. One could imagine as plausible an assumption that says that there is a close link between written and verbal language on the one hand and visual language on the other. In other words, you are more likely to be

articulate in your visual expression the more articulate you are in your written and verbal language. But Renalnto's work would defy this: although his language skills were still developing - as seen especially in the fragmented way he puts forward his arguments - his visual work exhibited a remarkable clarity and immediacy that was much more sophisticated and nuanced than his spoken or written expression. In pedagogical terms, this could mean that completely different skills are involved and rather than trying to find necessarily the common threads between the two systems of signification (which certainly exist), it might be more productive to recognise their differences, their different ways of making meaning and work with those instead.

Finally, we can return to questions of media literacy and composition. On the organisational level, we can identify various degrees of coherence in these pictures, as not everything was carefully planned and a lot of the elements seemed to be there accidentally or at least with minimal thought or planning.

After examining the photos and also considering his fragmented discourse, as well as his overall 'performance' and stance in the class during the project, one could easily conclude that Renalnto's visual statements are much stronger than his language statements. Evidently, some other undiscovered potential had been unleashed for him over the course of the photography activity and experience.

Photos and the visual tools they entail, provided Renalnto with a new language he could use to 'tell' things that he couldn't easily articulate in his spoken language - either because of poor language skills (difficulty with Greek as a foreign language?) or because of possible mild learning difficulties which prevented him from always fully and accurately expressing himself and his thoughts - a possibility that his teacher had

also suggested. It would have been easy to dismiss him in the classroom given his language skills and his overall academic performance. But his visual grammar seems to have more coherence and syntax than his verbal one. The fragmented linguistic statements have given way here to quite advanced and accomplished visual compositions. How does this happen? We can suggest that the visual language has its own, less rigid rules and that those less accomplished in the linguistic competence can still express themselves in this other 'language'. That makes it even more pressing to make this language available to students by teaching it as part of the curriculum.

This finding confirms the assertions made by other relevant studies (Buckingham, Grahame & Sefton-Green, 1995; Burn & Durran, 2007) that media work comprises an activity that disenchanted students in particular (though clearly not only them) can find liberating and a tool in the form of developing a voice for self-expression that other school curriculum subjects do not provide.

At the same time, and as a conclusion, whereas Giannis was exploring not so much what it means to be a child but rather what he could look forward to in the future as an adult, we see that Renalnto is exploring mostly issues related to his age, such as playing football, friendship and outdoors exploration.

5.4.4 Case Study 3: Myrto

Myrto is an 11-year-old girl in Year 5 and she was described by her teacher as among the academically most competent students. She has a younger sister, Hara, who attends Year 3 in the same school and she had a role in the video the children produced later in the project. Myrto comes from a middle-class family: her father is a senior policeman while her

mother stays at home. They also own a summer house in a nearby village. Admittedly, Myrto has an aptitude for music and theatre. She takes music lessons and plays the piano; her family owns an upright piano which Myrto plays at home. She has also had drama lessons and she is always chosen to lead the school plays. It appears that for Myrto, life is a stage; and she speaks, behaves and acts accordingly – a tendency that was observed both in school as well as outside school while with her friends: her speaking voice is artificially smooth with a legato ‘bel canto’ mannerism, her gestures are grand and exaggerated and her reactions, with their frequent outbursts and tantrums, were reminiscent of a royal diva. Along with any genuine quest for creativity and self-expression, I would observe that the arts and her involvement with it, is another realm where Myrto would try and find opportunities to exhibit her strong impetus for prominence and being visible in the public – mainly school and friends’ circle in this case – domain. She was quite eager to participate – and vying often to lead – though her ideas were not always welcome or thought of as the most brilliant or innovative by her colleagues. Together with her best friend Anna, the two formed a very strong pole in the classroom setting that quite often managed to lead and direct decisions their own way regarding the photos and in particular the film, as it will be shown later in the project.

The 16 photos in total that have her as their main subject and have been taken either by her (a kind of self-portrait or ‘selfie’, before the term was popularised in the way it is currently – 5 in total) or by others (mother, sister, classmates – 9 in total) reveal the above claims. Myrto is posing deliberately, and the photos are staged in the manner of a fashion show. They are all staged with Myrto being fully aware that she is being photographed as she appears to have made a special effort to prepare the look she wants in a carefully manicured presentation.



Figure 5.22: Myrto posing in school



Figure 5.23: Myrto posing in school

In photo in Figure 5.22 and particularly Figure 5.23, for example - both taken by Giorgia, a girl in the class who only participated in the 'before' stage of the still photographs - one could notice the deliberately voluptuous look and the arms being artificially tight on her legs to look slimmer; a preoccupation with body shape that she also repeated several times in the interviews and discussions in the class. Myrto is by far the most photographed person in the project and she is indeed quite photogenic. She is also very popular among her classmates and makes her desire to be photographed very clear to all of them.

'Before photos'

11 photos were taken in the 'before' set. Regarded as a whole, they look more like snapshots from a family album, as they are all depicting people Myrto feels close to in one way or another, primarily it seems, her sister and her schoolmates. There are no pictures of objects. Framing in most of them is rather accidental as there is a whole lot of space around the images, especially above the subjects' heads (see photos no. 39, 41, 44, 46 - in Appendix B3).



Figure 5.20: The school's boys volleyball team

Figure 5.20 (shown also earlier above, as part of Renalnto's case study photographs, for comparison purposes) shows the school's boys volleyball team and it was taken just before the team was about to take on a neighbouring school in the annual Rethymno region schools sport competition. Four of the boys wear identical black shirts bearing the name of the school, and the fifth boy wears a black shirt with a loosely sport theme which reads 'Championship'.

The background appears insignificant; in fact, strictly speaking, there is no background, both in the sense that being simply a white wall is not recognised as anything in particular, and also in the sense that it is not constructed or specially chosen by the photographer. At the same time, though, this choice - made consciously or not - has the effect of not distracting the viewer's attention away from the main subject. The location seems also insignificant; the picture could have been taken anywhere as the only background appears to be the eucalyptus tree. But to an insider who sees the photograph, this background is not a mere coincidence. This particular spot is a favourite corner among older students to gather, chat and play sports; an observation of the significance attached to favourite locations in schools made also in other similar projects, such as Potter's (2009).

As the white wall removes any references to sports or school or any other association, it makes the picture a 'universal', transcended statement about friendship and particularly boys' bonding.

This sense of 'bond' is carried through other means as well. As the boys embrace each other with their arms above each other's shoulders, their bodies get really close, leaving no gap between them. As such, they come out as a single, strong unit. The very act of embracing each other is in itself an indication of the intimacy and the bond these young athletes

have carved between them. [For a comparison, see Figure 5.17 taken by Renalnto (in Renalnto's case study photographs earlier and photo no. 282 (in Appendix B4), taken by Sotiris, a boy that only participated in the 'before' photography stage. They are both pictures of groups of children but photographed as having a looser bond between their members].

Moreover, the black shirts - what in social semiotics is called 'attributes' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 108), being the significant characteristics of the 'Carrier' (the bearer of the characteristics) "such as skin colour, colour and kind of hair, colour of eyes, items of clothing" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 108) - more than being sports shirts (they don't have clear reference markers here, as noted) they accentuate this sense of uniformity that comes out of the picture: they appear as a continuous, uninterrupted flow of black.

Additionally, set against the black shirts, the white background creates a stark contrast of colour tonality, making the shirts stick out more prominently. The similar heights of the four boys - only interrupted by the taller boy at the far right end - creates also a sense of balance.

From the 'protagonists' point of view I would stress that although they are posing for this picture, the staging is quite genuine and with their unpretentious smiling, 'clean' faces, straight and relaxed look they envision the outcome of the game in a positive, confident way. One can imagine them enjoying the game that is to follow soon after.

Framing and composition has not been considered very carefully by Myrto. The photo has been taken from an eye level and it is a medium shot. The faces and the shirts - which are the main themes here - are in the centre of the photo, but there is substantial unnecessary space above the children's heads, although on the sides the framing is tight. Similarly,

chopping people around their bellies in a photo is typically thought of as inappropriate. As I noted, this is a typical example of Myrto's 'before' photos which were all chopped around the leg height. But despite these shortcomings the picture as a unit - both in its content and in its form - reflects Myrto's own preoccupation for staged photographs and this is what might have inspired her to take this picture. In fact, all photos of people she has taken, both in the 'before' and 'after' sets, are staged with people looking straight to the camera.

Finally, how does the photographer relate to the subject? A useful way to think about that is to consider the photographer as an actor within the drama as well. Myrto is not a member of this team but she has, first of all, 'created' the team in symbolic terms, as a photographic representation. In that sense she is a kind of participant in bringing the team together. Furthermore, although she is only vaguely related to this cult's common interest as such (she is not into sports herself), she has a 'vested interest' in the outcome of the actual activity and also in the people themselves. The team represents the school in a sports competition and Myrto wants her school to win, she wants therefore the player boys to look nice and confident. An element of gender relations may be involved here too: Myrto, a girl, photographing boys, possibly having been attracted by their appearance as well. Indeed, Myrto is generally confident with boys and hence she wouldn't have felt shy getting close and taking pictures of them, in contrast to her peers in the project (most notably Renalnto), who demonstrated no apparent interest in the opposite gender.



Figure 5.24: Hara, Myrto's sister

Figure 5.24 is a photo of Hara, Myrto's younger sister, photographed in their bedroom. Indeed, Myrto has taken quite a few photos of her sister as compared with other children in the project who have siblings and that reflects the close relationship the two sisters enjoy. In contrast, Giannis for example, took only two photos of his younger sister: one 'before' and one 'after', a fact that seemed to parallel their relationship. Indeed, he seemed quite detached from his sister, hardly ever acknowledging or mentioning her, although she also attended the same school. On the contrary - and although different characters (Hara is more of a 'tomboy', in the sense that Bailey, Bechtold & Berenbaum (2002: 333) define the term as "girls who behave like boys"; Myrto, on the other hand, being more 'girly' (Oliver, Hamzeh & McCaughtry, 2009) - they are very close to each other, and Myrto often talked very fondly of her sister. Hara also appeared in a short yet substantial role in the group video the children created later in the project; there, she played the brave policewoman that deterred an attempted robbery. In the photo above, Hara is wearing her pyjama bottoms and her mother's nightgown.

Myrto revealed in the interview that she instructed her sister to wear the gown for the photograph. Not only does she 'directs' herself when she poses for other people but she also had no trouble directing others. Equally, though, Hara proved to be quite cooperative in performing the role assigned to her, the role of an aspiring adult that Myrto also often adopts. No doubt Myrto must have provided the basic instructions regarding the staging of the photos but it was up to Hara to implement the finishing details: tight lips, raised arms, the twisted head in relation to the axis of the rest of her body, the posture, all give an air of a grown-up which is a role they are rehearsing here. It is done nevertheless in a self-aware and almost comical way, distancing itself from attempts from parents or professional photographers to present children as already grown-ups with careful hairstyle, lots of make-up, and exaggerated posing.

If we assume that the photo is primarily about Hara (and Myrto herself as well who designed the idea) posing as an adult, then in compositional terms it is not ideal. The salient object is centred but there are many other elements in the picture that are distracting. The framing of the subject in a long shot leaves too much space above and in the sides while the girl's feet have been chopped. We can only assume that the background is intentional as Myrto must have thought (or rather sensed) that the picture of the girl only acquires its full intended meaning in this case placed within the context of the bedroom. That gives her also the opportunity to include other objects important to her. The purple rabbit and the white teddy bear feature also in photo no. 62 (in Appendix B3), indicating that they are among Myrto's favourite toys. The position of the camera is slightly tilted up which enhances the sense of superiority exhibited by Hara.

In this photo both girls appear to explore what it feels like to be an adult and they do that through playing being adults: posing and dressing up as adults and adopting the necessary paraphernalia and rituals, in the sense that Goffman (1956) describes of the performance of self. Hara does that from the point of the 'model', whereas Myrto from the standpoint of the instigator and photographer. This kind of dressing up is quite common among sisters as indeed with all children of that age. So for them, this activity was not a new one, totally constructed for the photo. This is something that must have been rehearsed many times before. But the fact that this time was to be photographed gives them the opportunity not only to create a permanent recollection of it but also to consider issues that wouldn't have been thought of previously: how do you include all the necessary elements into a single photo (in reality they would have many attempts), how do you make these elements prominent and recognisable to an audience that is not present, how do you freeze the action. Again, Myrto's preoccupations with staging find their expression in this photo.

'After'

In the 'after' set, more pictures were taken: there were 27 attempted pictures by Myrto of which 23 did come out. These can be classified in the following categories:

- people (friends, family) - 12
- house - 6
- favourite objects - 4
- nature - 1

There is evidently a significant change in the variety and the content of pictures in the 'after' set. Myrto, as some of the other young photographers did over the course of the project, realised that other subject matters are worthy of being photographed, apart from people and they too constitute part of everyday life. Myrto also made some changes

in framing with two pictures in her 'after' set now taken in close up [Figure 5.25 (below) and photo no. 62 (in Appendix B3)].

Evidently, she had given more thought to framing this time than before as the pictures seem to be tighter in general with fewer of them having unnecessary space around them (see for instance photos no. 51, 57, 59 – in Appendix B3).



Figure 5.25: Vase with flowers at Myrto's home

This picture in Figure 5.25 shows a glass vase with flowers in Myrto's house. It constitutes an example of the changes in the 'after' set that I indicated above. Myrto has included some photos of objects in her 'after' set and not solely people as she did in the 'before' set. In terms of framing, it is also an instance of a close up or at least an attempt on the part of the photographer to get closer and attribute prominence to the subject, which is a characteristic that did not feature in the 'before' set. Flash was also used as can be seen in the reflection on the vase. Myrto must have been standing very close to the subject, hence the reflection, which put the photo on the border of being overexposed.

KV: What type of frame is this?

MYRTO: Long

KV: Why?

MYRTO: Because there can be seen other objects at the back. You can see at the back the place we keep glasses

KV: Were you close or far?

MYRTO: Very close, in which case it's a close up

In terms of concept formation and its linguistic expression, the analysis of the above extract reveals how Myrto successfully decomposed the simple abstract concept of "long" shot (that she initially thought the shot of the vase was one of) into verb forms (action, that is) and local and situated detail in order to define the concept. This is achieved through employing what Halliday (1989) calls, as noted already in the Methodology Chapter 4, a 'lexically sparse formation', being characterized by spread-out grammatical formulations and significant verbs. As such, in Myrto's formulation above, the number of function words prevail over content words.

In this instance then, we can observe the dynamic, cyclical movement of concept formation: whereas initially, departing from lexically sparse formulations, learners arrived at nominalisation and a relatively stable acquisition of concepts and metalinguistic terms, they are then able to follow the opposite direction in order to reaffirm this knowledge.

On another level though, although the extended definition is correctly describing the concept of 'long' shot, Myrto initially does not get the actual framing of this particular shot right.

Indeed, the discussion with her, although intended initially just to find out about the distance Myrto photographed the object from and the type of frame used, instead reveals Myrto's variant 'definitions' of the different types of shots. In the first instance, she defines long shots as the ones that allow many objects to appear in the photo. In the second, she defines close ups as those shots that have been taken from a close distance.

Myrto is therefore ambivalent in the criteria that need to be applied to determine a shot type: she fluctuates between using the 'volume' or 'mass' of the objects in a photo and the distance between the camera and the object to judge the type of frame. I will return to the issue of the different definitions of frames the children arrived at later at the end of this chapter.

In terms of her decision to use flash, this is justified, as the room appears to be poorly lit, judging from the dark background. At the same time though, Myrto has gone too close, resulting in the picture being blurred. Both points about flash and distance alert us to the fact that although the photo was taken after the series of lessons we had with the children where these exact issues had been explored, Myrto is still exploring their affordances resorting thus occasionally to the more extended formulations:

KV: Has it come out clear?

MYRTO: No

KV: Why, do you know?

MYRTO: Hm ... no ... well ... because when we get very close to an object, they come out blurred.

Here again, in terms of language, we are observing the use of verb forms and actional sequences rather than abstract nouns.

Elsewhere in the thesis, I have discussed the issue of technical standards of the photos the children have taken and I have argued that although often not technically accomplished –in the way conventionally an expert or professional would have done– this fact does not deter children from deeming many photos as ‘passable’ by the sheer virtue of having their subject being just discernible. Though the photo here is not necessarily a very striking example of this (it is obvious that it is a vase, though quite blurred) it is indicative of the above approach both on the part of the teacher who is trying to alert the student on the possible ‘mistake’ and on the part of the student and her response:

KV: Will the others understand? Because it’s blurred...

MYRTO: Yes, they will understand it is a vase

In terms of composition, it is the actual vase rather than the flowers that is more central. In fact, some of the flowers on the top have been cut out of the frame. Despite the angle being slightly tilted making thus the flowers appear more prominent, it is still the glittering vase that occupies most space in the composition. The framing itself is quite tight. Myrto’s choice to photograph the vase was not accidental. She likes ‘artistic’ (in the tradition of still nature) as well as domestic objects as can be seen throughout the project and here she managed to get both within a single object. Her motivation for taking this photo was made explicit in the interview:

KV: What did you want to show here?

MYRTO: The vase

KV: Why did you want it Myrto?

MYRTO: Because, first of all, these are my favourite flowers and I picked them up and that’s my favourite vase. There’s another one but it’s quite high up because I’ve broken some of my mum’s vases...

And at another instance further down in the same interview:

KV: Do you want this?

MYRTO: Yes

KV: Why?

MYRTO: Because I like the vase. It's the only one that's been left, I mean, there are others but my mum has got them...

In the first extract it is worth observing that the words which have been underlined (*my*, *I*, *my*) were particularly emphasized and stressed by Myrto when uttered; both in tonal emphasis as well as in volume. As Burn (2013: 44) notes:

as in any speech, these improvisatory elements – the tonal contours, the tempo, volume, vocal timbre – all of these are not merely material appendages to the signifying properties of language, but contributors to the meaning.

These language features are examined in more detail as auditory modes in Burn's (2013) kineikonic model - part themselves of what Burn calls the wider 'contributory' modes - that will be applied in the video analysis in next Chapter 6.

This is a kind of utterance that Myrto will repeat several times during the discussions we had when describing her photos, as it will be seen again below. This indicates starkly the importance she attributes not only to the object itself but also to the other actions surrounding it and particularly her agency in those: it is the fact that she picked up the flowers herself and she prepared them in the vase and she expresses that in linguistically appropriate forms: the stress and rising tone on the personal pronouns (themselves markers of agency), suggest confidence and a degree of dominance. On another level though, it could be also argued that this personal association is not so much about the object as such (it could have been anything in a sense) but more about Myrto finding yet another opportunity to talk about herself, her actions and strong preferences.



Figure 5.26: Anna posing with football shirt

Figure 5.26 is a photo showing Anna, Myrto's best friend and classmate holding a football shirt of their favourite football team, that of 'Panathinaikos' of Athens.

The framing involves a lot of unnecessary headroom and space on either side of the photo but at the same time there are no chopped parts as was the case with most of the pictures from the 'before' set, and which is indicative of the change that occurred with the 'after' photos. The photo is set on the school playground and although not many details are revealed about the surrounding area, it is clear to an outsider that the curved white line on the ground and the green pole are parts of the basketball ground. Whether Myrto deliberately wanted to make an explicit

connection between the subject of the photograph and its location is not clear. It is nevertheless an appropriate sport corner so there is some indication that the choice is not entirely accidental – a further sign that a different kind of thinking has begun to emerge upon considering their photos. In any case, in terms of location, the photo has its significance as it is taken right next to the favourite corner where the volleyball team was photographed earlier (see Figure 5.20 above).

I had some difficulty deciding what is the salient object in this photo, what is it that Myrto wanted to show mostly. Is it a picture of a girl or a shirt? Anna is in the centre of the composition but so is the shirt she is holding. She is not constructed as performing a particular action; she is 'simply' holding the shirt. Her body posture, the way she is holding the shirt, her left foot twisted outside, all are reminiscent of the way female presenters in Greek television quiz shows might exhibit the prizes for the aspiring contestants. Could it have been a different person displaying the shirt? Or Anna holding a different shirt?

Both are possible but the combination of the two elements carries a lot of significance and provides some answers to the above questions. Anna is not just a random girl but something akin to Myrto's alter ego, a very close person indeed. In fact, when Myrto asked in the interview to point to her favourite photos from those she has taken, she placed this one quite high among her favourites. The strong bond between them became apparent throughout the entire project, particularly so during the video activity where tough decisions had to be made and the two girls exhibited a unanimous and powerful allegiance. Equally, the shirt is not just an ordinary shirt. For them, it holds a major significance as it is the one worn by their favourite football team. This is not to say that the two girls are particularly into football, like some of their peers were – the interviews did not confirm such an adoration of sports. Rather, by exhibiting the shirt

they ally themselves with the milieu of the teams' supporters, they signify that they belong to that group; and belonging to groups is very important for people at this age, especially to groups that have acquired a particular social status over time. Moreover, this shirt was not bought or brought from home and it doesn't belong to any of the girls. It belongs to a boy from their class and it was worn by him in the photo with the three boys posing, taken by Stella (Figure 5.21 above). In this way, the girls declare that they have similar taste to that of the boys and they can equally belong and participate in that cult as well.

As in the case of the other sub-case studies examined above, it seems necessary to consider the role played by other modes, in particular the 'dramatic' modes (dress, posture, action), as well as what Burn (2013) calls the 'orchestrating mode' of filming.

In any case, the kind of relation that exists in real life between the two girls carries on in the photo as well and this can be easily inferred knowing the two. Myrto, once again, wants to stage people and objects and she finds the perfect model in her best friend, as she did previously with her sister Hara. At the same time, Anna also is a cooperative person who would willingly do anything for her friend.

In analysing further the interview data, I will discuss them in relation to the three main research questions, namely concerning identity, media literacy and learning.

As with the previous participants, an initial point of discussion relates to identity.

While the four pictures discussed above were chosen by me as what I regarded the most representative of Myrto's pictures, they were not necessarily the ones that she thought of as most important and interesting, as it became apparent from the interview held after the end

of the photography part. And although in some cases she chose the same ones I did, her reasons for selecting a representative photo were different from my reasons. According to Myrto, the pictures she chose as most representative of her included her house, her family, her best friend Anna and another with her two beloved (girl)friends, her piano, the glass vase, the English language school she was attending, her mother and sister, her favourite teddy bear, her room's curtain and the porcelain doll.

A variety of reasons emerged explaining why Myrto chose these particular photos and I have identified four as the main ones in the extracts below:

KV: Why did you say you want this?

MYRTO: I want them to see my bedroom...

KV: What's this?

MYRTO: The piano

KV: Why did you want to show this?

MYRTO: Because it's my favourite object

KV: Now, Myrto, I want you to look at all the photos you've taken and choose which ones we'll send to the children in England so that they can learn about you

MYRTO: This one with my parents

KV: Why?

MYRTO: I want them to see all my family. And this

KV: Why?

MYRTO: It's my home. Then this of my mother

MYRTO: Because it is my [girl]friends and I love them very much.

MYRTO: Here it's me. I want them to know I play the piano

MYRTO: This is my teddy bear

KV: Why have you chosen him?

MYRTO: Because I love him very much

MYRTO: My favourite spot is the living room and my room. Oh yes, and my big piano. Here it is...

The reasons Myrto has put forward for choosing these photos reflect her most immediate interests as a sign maker (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006): her teddy bear and piano as favourite objects; parents, family and (girl)friends as favourite people; bedroom and living room as favourite spots. In that sense, the photos also serve a curatorial function (Potter, 2012a) as Myrto attempts through them to preserve them and maintain them for future purposes.

KV: Why did you take a picture of the house?

MYRTO: Because Anna wanted to see my house ... Can I call her in to have a look? ... Sir, hang on a second because... [she is searching for a photo through the pile]. This one in the English language school we attend. I have to show it to Anna at any cost!

Here, the motivation for choosing these photos is their immediate communicative function and connection with others. A photo is taken to be shown to and inform someone who was not present at the time the photo was taken, in this case Anna. These examples show how the children use the texts to record or make a statement about things in their lives that are significant to them and also to circulate those images acquiring thus another significance in terms of social interaction. This need for informing carries a sense of immediacy with it and it was interesting for me as researcher to notice during the interview how Myrto's request somehow attempted to break down the boundaries between 'artificial' interview and 'real' life.

KV: So, tell me. Look at all of them carefully. Which ones do you like most?

MYRTO: This one, my family...

KV: Yes...

MYRTO: I like it very very very much

KV: Are you happy with the way your house has turned out in this picture?

MYRTO: No

KV: Why?

MYRTO: First of all, I didn't want to capture that other gentleman's house...

KV: After the lessons we had, when you see photographs what do you look for, what do you say?

MYRTO: If it's nice or ugly the one that's been taken

KV: Do you mean the face?

MYRTO: Yes, the face I like very much to look at. The make up, I do it sometimes, the hair and the close ups and all the rest of it.

In these instances, the criterion employed to select these photographs is the content of the photographs, the person or the object depicted and the way they look, rather than the actual photographic qualities such as composition and framing. This tendency has also been documented by Sharples et al. (2003) in their research among the children who took photographs and their responses. The family photo (photo no. 51) is underexposed and blurred but Myrto includes this photo in her favourite ones as she loves her family very much. The determining factor is the subject and the value and importance the subject has for the photographer regardless of any possible shortcomings as a picture (chopped, blurred).

In the last of the above interview extracts, Myrto ranks her priorities when choosing photos: first is the face, the make-up and the hair (content) and then the close up (photographic quality per se).

An exception to this happened further down:

MYRTO: This is my teddy bear

KV: Why have you chosen him?

MYRTO: Because I love him very much and because I like the photograph in general

In this instance we have maybe the first attempt from Myrto to consider aesthetic but also affective elements of the photographs, apart from the subject ones.

KV: Any others that you like?

MYRTO: My room, the big piano...

KV: The piano, yes...

MYRTO: And here where I play the piano.

KV: Why?

MYRTO: Because it's me playing!

MYRTO: Sir, can my jowl be seen here?

KV: Well ... a bit ...

MYRTO: I'm not picking this one then!

MYRTO: And the English [language school]

KV: Why the English?

MYRTO: Because I want to see my friends and also my auntie teaches there...

KV: Did you think about that though or it came out by accident, by chance?

MYRTO: No, I thought about it

KV: What do you mean?

MYRTO: Because me, I like to know something that others don't know. To know that the house continues [in the picture] whereas Aris, let's say, who hasn't been there doesn't know.

KV: Tell me, Myrto, which others did you like most?

MYRTO: This is my beloved teddy bear. Sir, it came out huge!

KV: Did it turn out ok?

MYRTO: Me, I like it

KV: Why?

MYRTO: Because, first of all, I am with my beloved teddy bear...

KV: What did you want here to show?

MYRTO: The vase

KV: Why did you want it Myrto?

MYRTO: Because, first of all, these are my favourite flowers and I picked them up and that's my favourite vase.

In the last two extracts here, as earlier above, the personal pronouns Myrto uses have been underlined in the transcription as a way of indicating the stress she placed on them when pronounced. Such a strong use of the pronouns, which act as identity discourse markers, reveals the agency Myrto has – or wishes and tries to have – upon her choices and preferences but also how carefully she cultivates the impression others

can form of her by unmistakably stressing her particular activities and traits.

The motivation then for choosing this set of photos is a very strong personal involvement represented in them. Myrto either identifies herself as something prominent or she puts forward a characteristic of hers, in which case the photos become about the way she looks. These compositions, then, as with the earlier sub-case studies, display the performance of identity, the curation (Potter, 2012a) of images of personal, domestic culture. They are a dramatization of selfhood, childhood and immediate geo-cultural context.

Next, I move on to discuss aspects of media literacy evident in Myrto's photos.

KV: What was your subject?

MYRTO: My subject is the piano

KV: And why did you take ... what kind of shot is that?

MYRTO (she pauses): It is ... a bit of medium...

KV: What do you mean?

MYRTO: I mean, it's shown... it's not... it cuts off a bit here ... Just, over here, the little wheels can be seen, but here they don't...

The piano is 'a bit of medium' shot. Through this description, Myrto points to the fact that although in the lessons we had only talked about the three basic types of frames (close up, medium shot, long shot) in reality she resists this categorisation as she discovers that these categories are not adequate and that there is a need for further gradations - as it happens in the filmic 'reality' - although at this stage she does not have the specific metalinguistic terms for them.

KV: Now, if you see a photograph in a magazine or a book or newspaper and you want to analyse it, what are you going to think?

MYRTO: To tell its close ups, its long ones, the angles, the lighting, the flash...

KV: What exactly could you remember most from all the things we've talked about?

MYRTO: Long shots, far shots, flash, and the strange angles. Those.

KV: What type of frame is this?

MYRTO: Long

KV: Why?

MYRTO: Because there can be seen other objects at the back. You can see at the back the place where we keep the glasses

KV: Were you close or far?

MYRTO: Very close, in which case it's a close up

KV: Tell me, Myrto, which others did you like most?

MYRTO: This is my beloved teddy bear. Sir, it came out huge!

KV: Right. Is it how you wanted it to be? Close up?

MYRTO: Yes, so that his face can be seen

KV: Tell me. When you were taking a photo what would you think? I want you to describe how you would think...

MYRTO: Yes, that's the stress I'm having ... I did that many times. I had to think first, otherwise what's the point?

KV: And what were you thinking of?

MYRTO: If it will come out ok, if the others will like it, mainly if I would like it, you know... flash, strange, interesting...

KV: Were you thinking all that? Would you remember them?

MYRTO: Yes

MYRTO: I look very short here. I must've been photographed from above

KV: Did you say this one makes you look shorter? Why?

MYRTO: Because I was being photographed from above.

KV: Now, what else did you know, what did you remember from the activities we did which helped you to take better pictures?

MYRTO: The shots...

KV: Which means...

MYRTO: The long, the medium, the general...

KV: Did you know those before?

MYRTO: I only knew close up

KV: How did you know it?

MYRTO: I would hear it on television. They would say, let's say, journalist X would take a close up for us in this adventure...

KV: Do they not say medium and long as well?

MYRTO: No

In all these extracts, Myrto seems able to recall the specialised vocabulary we made use of throughout the lessons. 'Strange angles' is the term we initially used to collectively describe any other angles that deviate from the standard eye-level one. Occasionally, the teacher cannot be sure whether these terms have been mastered properly and been stabilised, especially when Myrto simply lists the terms. At one point she reiterates terms that have been introduced by the teacher to describe and differentiate the shots (e.g. 'strange', 'interesting' – see extract above).

In the last of the above extracts, she mixes elements from different genres that she sees on television, as she has done many times before. At other points, nonetheless, she offers more extended explanations which entail the seeds of a firmer understanding, particularly with the definition of close up and the point about the shot taken from above where she spots firstly the right angle and then she understands the result this effect has. In all the aforementioned interview excerpts, it is possible, with the aid of the Hallidayan approach (1994), to detect again the switching between the abstract nouns and the verb forms which decompose the angle or framing into action denoted by verbs.

In this way, the dialectic and cyclical nature of the concept formation becomes apparent: the route to the understanding (and to recalling and describing afterwards) can proceed either from the term to the unpacked description or vice versa. In any case, whichever way it moves, the one seems to reinforce and solidify the other.

KV: Did you want the bathroom to be seen here?

MYRTO: No

KV: So how did it come out?

MYRTO: I forgot to pull the curtain

KV: What else could you have done?

MYRTO: Move further over

KV: Do you like it like that?

MYRTO: Yes, I do. Did I not tell you that I like it if the objects are on the side, like that...

KV: Yes, but you said your subject is the piano. If someone looked at this picture, they might've thought that the subject is the bathroom

MYRTO: No

KV: Why?

MYRTO: Because the piano is more central, I saw the piano straightaway

KV: You know that because you took it. Somebody else that sees it for the first time how can they understand that the...

MYRTO: I think they will

KV: Why?

MYRTO: Because the piano is bigger than the door.

Here again, Myrto seems to understand that you can change the angle by moving to a different point which although seemingly trivial is a big step forward compared to their earlier efforts. With regard to the point about the piano, the observation that because the piano is central in the framing it should therefore be thought of as the main subject of this picture is correct. As for the second statement it has to be noted that - especially in the children's case - it does not necessarily mean that because Myrto saw the piano straightaway she placed it in the centre of the picture. We have seen elsewhere that the supposed main subject of a picture can be, and it has been placed at different points within the frame simply by lack of close attention. But Myrto's assertion still carries with it an indication that even for the amateur photographer - and maybe particularly for him/her - there is a strong link between the prominence of an object and its centrality within a frame which here is being made explicit pointing to the fact that it may be far from accidental after all. The last point ('the piano is bigger than the door') reinforces for Myrto the connection between size and prominence.

KV: What is a good photo for you?

MYRTO: First of all, the object in question has to be visible, that goes without saying

KV: What else?

MYRTO: You have to be able to see what's next to it. I would say that you have to be able to see what area the object is in because it could be behind a rubbish dump and that I wouldn't like at all. I would also like to be able to see other things nearby; let's say I would like to see my sister very close but having the things behind her looking far away as I've said.

Here, as noted elsewhere, the characteristics of a 'good photo' for Myrto comprise almost exclusively a 'good topic'.

Finally, we can observe certain processes in these activities that count as learning, in relation to the pedagogic approach which framed the activity. In terms of concept development then, the evolution of a conceptual grasp of not only the nature of shot proximity but also its meaning is evident here. Once again, it is expressed in a lexically dynamic way, through verbs rather than abstract nouns such as 'close-up' and 'long shot' However, despite this, Myrto's conceptual grasp is already complex, challenging the simplicity of the way these concepts are taught in media and film education. We will follow Myrto's developing grasp of these ideas, and their dialectic relation to her practice, in Chapter 7.

MYRTO: ...whilst now I know

KV: What do you know?

MYRTO: If it's a close up, if it's long, if it's good, if it's strange, interesting, everything...

KV: What do you mean good or strange?

MYRTO: Let's say, to have in the photo a dog and a cat being very close to each other...

KV: Did you take any unusual angles?

MYRTO: Unusual angles...This is an unusual angle...

KV: Do you mean the house? What's unusual about it?

MYRTO: Yes, you can see it from here and it appears as if it's one thing, like that. Not everything is shown because there are other houses over there and they can't be seen from here

KV: Is that an unusual angle?

MYRTO: Yes

KV: What's unusual about this angle?

MYRTO: That over here, look, it looks like a little brick, like the ones we play, Lego

KV: What, the house?

MYRTO: Yes! Because it's long from here and from there it goes down, like it's made of those bricks, like the staircase of a giant's house.

As I have indicated above, the term 'strange angle' and 'unusual angle' that we used initially in the lessons referred to any angle except the eye-level ones, irrespective of the subject. Myrto bypasses the media definition and she opts for a more literal explanation. It is again the content of the photo which is the important aspect for her. She interprets it as 'strange content', 'unusual topic', as in her example of a dog and a cat coexisting in a photo.

KV: What else did you know then?

MYRTO: I knew about the strange angles

KV: What do you mean strange angles?

MYRTO: Well... let's say, that we photograph someone side-face, neither from below or ... ah, [suddenly she remembers] another strange angle is from above or from below... [I think that mentioning the word 'below' brought to her memory the other 'strange angles']

KV: What's the difference between 'from below' and 'from above'? When do we take something from below and when from above?

MYRTO: If we want to show that he is insignificant and a wee, like the monkey, let's say, we take it from above. If we want to show that he is brave and strong and the like, we go to do it from below.

In this extract, Myrto again appears able to break down the abstract concepts of 'high angle' and 'low angle' into their constitutive actions. This time, she even goes a step further into offering confidently some examples, in the form of expanded linguistic formulations, that attempt to demonstrate her understanding of these concepts. This is an instance of manifesting the idea of the expansive cycles of learning that Engestrom (1999) talks about. According to this, and what indeed we are seeing here happening, the move proceeds from the abstract to the concrete. Although seemingly counter-intuitive and reversing Vygotsky's own idea

of progressing from everyday to scientific concepts, it permeates what these young learners are doing which reinforces the notion of concept formation as being an intrinsically dialectic process.

Continuing on the subject of 'strange angles', here I want to point to another dimension. Although Myrto uses successfully the definitions of the lower and higher angle, the examples she uses (insignificant, wee, brave, strong) come from a photo of Benito Mussolini taken from below which I used in the lessons to illustrate the effect of the 'strange angles'. This points to a struggle that is potentially going on here. Is Myrto able to move from the individual case into generalising? And as such, from everyday concepts to scientific ones? Clearly, the ability to think conceptually is going to be a gradual, long-term process.

Also, in terms of pedagogy, apparent here is the kind of 'test' question I have already mentioned that I asked from time to time in the interviews (e.g. 'When do we take something from below and when from above?')

KV: So, you are happy with this picture

MYRTO: Yes

KV: Why didn't you go closer?

MYRTO: Because I wanted to see everything down to the last detail

KV: I see

MYRTO: If it was a close up you would see the keys [of the piano] and then they would think it was a keyboard and I don't like keyboards

KV: Before, when you used to look at a picture in a magazine or something, did you think 'where is the photographer now' or...

MYRTO: Yes! That's what I was thinking of. Where might he be standing. When I was little, I used to think that photos will come up just like that, invisible

KV: What do you mean?

MYRTO: That they would cut their face and they would stick it in

KV: And when did you realise that it's someone that takes the photos?

MYRTO: About eight years ago, when I was two

KV: And now?

MYRTO: Now I know everything.

KV: Now you think that if you find a photo in a magazine you'll take the time to look carefully and to analyse it?

MYRTO: Yes

KV: What do you mean?

MYRTO: Like here. I got used to that now

KV: What do you mean?

MYRTO: Well, it became a habit now. In the past I would flick a book through because I look at the pictures, not to read them.

Now I spend time to comment on the pictures, I talk about them with my mum, I comment again...

KV: What do you talk about with your mum?

MYRTO: I say to her 'mum we've learnt about these things. This is close up, this is long, this is a strange angle', all of that.

KV: If you wanted to teach someone how to take good photos, someone who doesn't know, what would you say?

MYRTO: First of all, I would start by taking photos, so that I could see if that child has the abilities, if he's clever, if he knows what to take

KV: Is it what we did?

MYRTO: Well, you asked us first to take pictures...

KV: What else would you tell him?

MYRTO: About all the close ups and the long shots, the strange angles and then I would tell him again to take some photos, a kind of test to prove to me everything he has learnt. The close ups, the long shots, the strange angles, flash, light, all of that. And then we would start something else, the video.

As I have noted elsewhere in the thesis, certain questions seem to trigger certain answers in Myrto who unfolds a narrative about things which she herself probably has not done. According to this, as she looks at certain photos and is being prompted to ask questions about them, she makes 'narratives on the spot' which in all probability were not there when the photo was first taken. Though understandably it is not always possible for her - as with anybody - to recall the initial motivation and the background behind every photo, she seems to go for a kind of 'preferred reading', for the most plausible explanation she can give. At the same time, she is able to offer a 'mini media curriculum' for the teaching of photography which again, though accurate, has come mainly from the teacher.

5.5 Conclusion

In the section that preceded, I have carried out an analysis of the process and the production of the still photographs activities, focusing on the three main research questions that underpin the thesis. Here, I will draw conclusions from the above discussion that address the three strands and point eventually to the emergence of a framework that describes in more detail the findings of this chapter, the 3Ds model (Dialectic – Dramatic – Developmental).

As a general conclusion, through the initial observations, I have identified four kinds of criteria the children were employing to identify and categorize the various types of shots:

- a. by the distance from the subject,
- b. by the part of the body (or the object) that appears and
- c. by the kind and 'density' of the information we get in the shot
- d. the position of the subject in relation to the surrounding area

Where the teaching has not been very explicit (I didn't particularly mention the various 'in between' types of shots) the children identified them as we went along. The criteria they had for classifying them only allowed for the three 'main' types to be identified so they puzzled a bit and they had to invent their own definitions and - consequently - language in order to describe them. We may say that from a teaching and learning point of view it was an omission that these other terms were not explained but incidentally that permitted somehow the observation of this particular function, that is, the criteria the children used when it came to unknown type of shots [see Lomax and Casey (1998)].

5.5.1 The Concept-Practice Dialectic

As stated above, the formal elements of the photos were one of the aspects the qualitative analysis focused on. In Barrett's (2005: 26) view, "*form* refers to how the subject matter is presented. Form is 'the shape of the content'. Descriptive statements about a photograph's form concern how it is composed, arranged, and constructed visually". Barrett goes on to outline more specifically the points that make up the form:

From the older artforms of painting and drawing, photography has inherited these formal elements: dot, line, shape, light and value, colour, texture, mass, space, and volume. Other formal elements identified for photographs include black and white tonal range; subject contrast; film contrast; negative contrast; paper contrast; film format; point of view, which includes the distance from which the photograph was made and the lens that was used; angle and lens; frame and edge; depth of field; sharpness of grain; and degree of focus (ibid : 27).

In the case of the children's photos, the focus of my analysis was the two media language dimensions, namely framing (the type of shot and the angle used) and composition (the arrangement of the elements within a frame; the main subject, the foreground and background, and supporting subjects) and secondarily the use of lighting and focus. Overall, this was about the kind of choices that have been made.

In relation to this focus, it has been observed in this study that the development from the before to the after photos demonstrates in different ways for the different children how a growing awareness of particular clusters of concepts shapes the composition and in turn the meaning. The main conceptual clusters relate to shot proximity and camera angle. There is evidence that in some cases the 'correct' terminology has been learnt and can be rehearsed. More importantly, the photos provide evidence of a complex dialectic between these conceptual clusters and the actual compositional practices. In some cases, the

adoption of intentional angles and distances at variance from the default framing seem to have been decoupled from the metalinguistic competence. In others, the growing conceptual understanding has been expressed as action rather than as abstract noun. In other examples, particularly Myrto's, the concept has in practice become more complex, as she struggles to express how different degrees of proximity might be needed for different elements of the shot. This dialectic, in which the application of a concept results not in a neat abstract encapsulation but in increased complexity, can be explained in terms of Engestrom's 'expansive cycles' (1999), which display exactly that dynamic relationship between concept and practice, abstract and concrete.

5.5.2 Dramatic Modes

The photos demonstrate how the process of composition, and importantly, meaning-making through composition, show that the photographic process – the media and film concepts – do not tell the whole story. The children are consciously deploying other semiotic modes that the teaching hadn't pointed to, most importantly those related to the dramatic performance of self: clothing, posture, action, and voice and it has to be observed that these were realised only so naturally as they are ingrained in the productions. In some cases, the need to capture action is so urgent that sequences of photos appear as a virtual photo-montage, foreshadowing - but also facilitating by offering analogies and antecedents - the work of the moving image which the children will move on to in the video project described in Chapter 6. This multimodal process is captured by Burn's distinction between the orchestrating modes of filming (and editing), and the contributory modes (e.g. those contained within dramatic performance) (Burn, 2013).

The meanings made by the dramatic modes are considered in the next section in relation to development and the performance of identity. Since they fall outside the strict frame of 'media language' on which the pedagogy of this project was based, they raise questions about how researchers and practitioners need to take account of this range of modes. These questions will be developed further in Chapter 6, in relation to how such modes also form part of the film-making process, and Chapter 7, which considers the implications of my findings.

5.5.3 Development

As described above, conceptual development is a vital aspect of the media literacy in evidence here. However, the deployment of these concepts and the compositional practices related to them, mean nothing except in the service of social and cultural meanings. In this respect, they need to be seen in the context of the representations the children are making. It also relates to the forms of dramatic performance described in the previous section, which recall Goffman's dramaturgical model of selfhood.

Additionally, we can consider the sociology of childhood which tells us how children go about their everyday lives. By looking at gender, ethnicity and social class - which are factors that play an important part in identity formation - we can begin to understand why the children take the particular photographs they take. Gender in particular is an important factor in explaining a lot of the things the children are doing. Thorne (1993) talks about how boys and girls play games in the playground. She observes how girls do 'girly things' and boys do 'boyish things', effectively how they 'do gender', in the context of their everyday play. The analysis in this chapter has precisely shown how the boys perform gender identity through references to sport and motorbikes, while one of the girls

similarly performs femininity through dress, posture, and the selection of domestic settings.

We have also seen that gender is about performance and ritual and also is something that is enacting, as Butler (1999) contends in her argument. In this way, she is connecting Goffman's notion of performance with the notion of gender enactment more specifically, in the ways we have seen in this chapter.

Particular reference needs to be made also to how identity relates to play. As seen, a large part of the photographic process took place around and during play. As the children play at school or outside, they experiment with the future roles they will adopt, especially through role-play in pretend and make-believe situations. Swann and Kehily (2003: 8) note on this:

These kinds of play are seen as crucial for children's personal development, as a form of rehearsal for future roles in adult life. Researchers have also pointed to the importance of role play to a child's developing sense of identity.

The photography activity was seen and exercised by the children as a form of play. Although it took place by some children on their own, it was mainly performed as a collective activity in the form of a game photographing each other and the children's particular friendships were determining factors in the outcomes of the activity, as has been shown in this chapter. To the extent that all these 'play factors' are relevant to the identity work referred to earlier, the photography activity has to be seen as another dimension of the sociocultural nature of media literacy, and indeed play is one of the aspects of the new media literacy proposed by Jenkins et al. (2007) in relation to the digital age. The camera was an intermediate 'play object', a 'tool' in the hands of the children and as such it fulfilled many purposes, similar to that of a toy (given of course the camera's 'repertoire', the things it can do) and I am referring here not so

much to the object (camera) itself, but rather to its function. The photography activity was dressed up as play and as such it interspersed with other elements found in play: power relations, rituals, identity work through play-photography.

In relation to these themes of self-representation, aspiration and development I have attempted to get some sense of the individual children and then examine how their preoccupations are represented in the content of the photos, and what the photographs tell us about each child's world. As we have seen, issues about social identity, about their position as children, about their position as boys and girls, about age, ethnicity and social class emerge from their compositions. As such, we get a glimpse both of their social worlds but also the roles and the varying repertoires of how they represent themselves and think of themselves within these worlds they inhabit.

We can only assume then, that it is the social capital and 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1984) which each of these young children carries, each one's own "given social-cultural domain" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001: 1) that directs them towards photographing particular topics that are recognised as familiar and important. This can also be explained in relation to social semiotics, which is concerned with the social motivation of the sign maker, the idea that signs are motivated by social interests. "*Interest* guides the selection of what is seen as the critical aspects of the object. Sign-makers have a meaning, the signified, which they want to express, and then express it through the semiotic mode which makes available the subjectively most plausible, most apt form, the signifier" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 8, italics in the original).

The children do not necessarily 'create' something in the artistic sense but of all the existing things they are surrounded by, they choose what they

like and what means something for them. They take pictures of their respective worlds, of the world they know. By examining these pictures, we can get to understand who these people are, where they come from, what they do. In relation to this, Barrett (2005: 43) notes:

There is no such thing as an innocent eye. We cannot see the world and at the same time ignore our prior experience in and knowledge of the world. Philosopher Nelson Goodman puts it like this:

"As Ernst Gombrich insists, there is no innocent eye... It functions not as an instrument self-powered and alone, but as a dutiful member of a complex and capricious organism. Not only how but what it sees is regulated by need and prejudice".

If there is no such thing as the innocent eye, there certainly isn't an innocent camera. What Goodman says of the eye is true of the camera, the photograph and the 'photographer's eye' as well: it selects, rejects, organises, discriminates, associates, classifies, analyzes, constructs.

In the next Analysis Chapter 6, I proceed to discuss the activities around video, focusing thus on the moving image.

Chapter 6 - Data Analysis 2: Video

This chapter focuses on the framing and composition activities related to moving image. As such, it will build on the analysis of formal composition and socio-cultural motivation evident in the photography activity discussed in the previous chapter, extending it to the making of the short film which was the culmination of the activities in this after-school club.

Similar to the process used with the stills and described in the previous chapter, there was a 'before' and an 'after' stage here too with my teaching intervention placed in between. Here, I trace the extent to which the transfer of knowledge between framing in stills and framing in moving image - as envisaged in my assumption - actually materialises. As part of this process, I examine the 'before' video produced, my interventions as a set of 'prompts' to the young learners throughout the project (a significant part of which is occupied by the storyboard the children were required to produce for their video that I also analyse), the students' responses and the 'after' video. As has been indicated previously, for purposes of space and focus, the teaching part will not be analytically discussed, although interventions that had significant impact on the learning will be mentioned as and when necessary.

Throughout the chapter - as has been the case with the previous one - two elements are primarily considered. Firstly, the acquisition of the specialized moving image metalanguage by the students. Secondly, the identity aspect: the gender relations and overall relationships between the children as well as their motivations and personal investments as they emerge from their production. I will investigate these elements in relation to Goffman's and Butler's theories about the performance of gender identity, as discussed in the Literature Review and Theory chapters.

At this stage of the project, following on from the photography activity, the video part took place. The stages the research followed in this project (including that of the video activities) have already been mentioned in the Methodology Chapter 4. As a reminder, the video stage consisted of several activities: initially the children were asked to produce a short video on a storyline they were given, without any instruction (assuming they would utilise the things they had learnt in the photography stage). Reflection on this production was then followed. Next, a series of teaching sessions regarding the moving image language and its ways of communication was placed. The video section ended with the creation of a storyboard for a final video that was subsequently filmed and edited by the young people themselves. This chapter will discuss precisely these stages and it will begin with reference to the 'before' video.

6.1 The 'Before' video

As soon as the photography stage was concluded, the video stage of the project commenced. I started the moving image activities by giving the students the video camera and a suggested brief story to film. No further instructions about composition, framing or editing were given. The aim here was to identify whether transfer and application of previous knowledge acquired in the photography stage, particularly on shot types, could be implemented.

The story concerned a man who, whilst walking down the street, drops his wallet without realising it. A passer-by notices it, picks it up, opens it and moves towards the first man with the intention to hand over the lost wallet. As soon as the first man notices that he is being approached by a stranger, he begins to run away with the second man chasing him.

This plot was given because, whilst simple, it still required several different shots and types of frames to be visually comprehensible – all things that had been discussed and worked on during photography.

The story was filmed, and it was afterwards critically reviewed by the class. The result did not meet the young makers' expectations. The children were expressing the opinion that the film was unintelligible; the actions of the two actors and their motivations were not clear. In their reflections, they made many pertinent points about the incoherence of their sequences, the problems with framing and composition, and with the shooting of continuous sequences with no construction of specific shots or cuts between actions. Indeed, the whole story was filmed in a single take with the camera person following the actors in their movements, whereas the film – though short – would have required different shots to make sense (including close ups for the crucial moments, such as the drop of the wallet that goes unnoticed by its owner and its content which seems to be responsible for the turn the story takes). There was a sense by which the children-actors were acting as if for the stage, with the camera being just a recording device to capture the action. It is characteristic that the film opens with a 'presenter' talking directly to the camera, introducing the story and announcing the actors, before turning to capture the main story.

Though the photographic activities that preceded facilitated to a great extent the learning of the media metalanguage and the related concepts, it appeared to have less impact on the video production level, at least in these early stages of working with the moving image. The examination of the video showed that the moving image entails different affordances, and the transfer of learning is not an automatic process.

As part of the discussion, the need grew for an organising mechanism that would ensure that people in a film (both in front as well behind the

camera) know what they are doing. This realisation gave me the right opportunity to introduce the practice of storyboarding, as described and analysed in the next section.

6.2 Storyboard

In this section, the activity of storyboarding that preceded the shooting of the final video will be discussed - both the drawings but also the discussions and the talking that went on during their creation - as an instance of the ongoing concept formation process. A full list of all the storyboards created as part of this activity can be found in the Appendix C. Six different storyboards were drawn by an equal number of children around the same story whose main twists had more or less been agreed by that time. Clearly, obvious variations exist between them, both in terms of drawing styles as well as of the sequence of events. Some storyboards are more complete, artistic and cover more events and scenes of the narrative to be filmed, whilst others less so. In that way, they represent varied degrees of understanding, progression and artistic competence. When it came to the filming though, it was decided by the children that two of the storyboards drawn would be followed - Myrto's (Storyboards 3A & 3B) and Anna's (Storyboard 4) which between them seemed to provide the most accurate instructions and be more fully developed.

Following brainstorming, group work and discussions, as well as many disagreements (regarding the plot but also the roles to be allocated) and final negotiations, the story that the group eventually devised for their film was decided to be called 'Milo Bar' (meaning 'Apple Bar' in Greek). It is located in a summer bar, on a Greek island, where various incidents take place, including an attempted robbery successfully averted by one of the courageous barmaids. The main protagonists are the two barmaids, played by the two dynamic 11 year-old girls, Anna and Myrto, with the support of

a number of other children actors: Aris in the role of the robber, Stella in the role of bar customer (both of them participants in the project) as well as Vaggelis (schoolmate and friend of the two protagonists - Year 5) in the role of the drunken customer, Hara (Myrto's younger sister - Year 4) in the role of policewoman and na (Giannis' younger sister - Year 4) in the role of another customer (the last three children came on board only to act in the video).

A storyboard is a series of sequential drawings or pictures that are used to represent the intended shots in a film. Ideally, a storyboard will be a paper version of the finished film (OCR, 2013). It shows how the filmmaker intends to shoot and frame various shots and illustrates camera movements that will be used. It also shows how a number of shots are going to link together to form a scene.

Conventionally, storyboards have three separate elements, according to Emerson (1993: 80):

1. A pictorial representation of the intended shot.
2. Directions to the crew, for example 'Start on close-up, wide angle out to whole of room' as well as notations about costume, lighting, camera work, and other matters.
3. The lines for the actors.

Typically, storyboards are used in the film industry both for pitching a story, and at the pre-production stage as a 'guide' for the film crew to know what will be filmed. Though fraught with difficulties, some of which I will consider in what follows, it was the later approach of the children visualising and getting a preliminary sense of what the finished shots should look like, that I employed the storyboards for; and this is routinely

what in the education field most practical media projects require children to do at some point of their production work (Buckingham, Grahame & Sefton-Green, 1995; Mills 2011; Parry, 2014).

Although at that point the actual story that was going to be filmed had not been fully finalised by the children, the very activity of having to put everything in place for the filming forced them to decide on the final version of the story. I consider this to be a kind of 'indirect benefit' of the storyboard in that it requires from the children to make their story more concrete; not just visually but also in terms of narrative.

Turning to the main issue now, it seems to me that in many ways the storyboarding activity is not just about planning the sequence of shots. My argument is that although at quite an advanced point of the project, the children were still experimenting with the terms and the concepts and with the ways these are depicted and 'translated' into their drawings – as observed in the 'before' video discussed just before. It became evident that storyboarding is not a straightforward, 'clean' activity where fixed concepts learned at an earlier stage simply find their way onto the drawing paper. Rather, it mostly involves conceptual exploration and finding ways of registering the terms. Indeed, the very task of having to depict the filmic concepts onto paper, opened new ways of thinking about them and defining them. Furthermore, that fact that these concepts have to be 'translated' into drawings, as said, posed further problems.

The idea of the storyboard and of creating one for their film was introduced by me. It was built nevertheless and found a fertile ground for grasping on the knowledge they had acquired up to that point through the experience of making their first filming attempt: the flaws and incoherencies recognized in them (by the young creators themselves) apart from

anything else were attributed to the lack of organisation, of not having planned in advance the story and what was to be filmed and how.

The conversations around the creation of the storyboards suggest that the fragmented nature of the storyboards - the fact that it does not appear to be a straightforward process - is indicative of this process of exploration. At the same time, as the children get involved with the activity, the actual exploration and formation of filmic concepts - which for the storyboard concern mainly the various types of shots and the shot proximity, and secondarily issues of editing - becomes intertwined with various other factors that emerge: perspective and vector, the modes of design and production, salience, and issues of social motivation. I will attempt to explore some of these issues below.

6.2.1 *Concept formation*

The process of concept formation is partly located in the conversations that surround the storyboarding activity, but it can also be partly traced in the drawings as well. In many instances in the extracts of the classroom discussion, we can see the children attempting to grasp and use the filmic concepts that relate to types of shots, proximity and perspective. Although similar discussions have obviously taken place earlier in this project, the storyboarding activity contains some vivid instances which, examined also from a methodological point of view, are quite advantageous: here any language used by the children to describe what they do as they go along is coupled with corresponding drawings ('correctly' or not is a different issue which will be explored further down). An analytical method is therefore needed for examining the ways in which concepts are initially formed and then represented in language and how the evolving process of concept formation finds its way into language as well as into the drawings.

I have therefore drawn and combined elements from three perspectives to analyse concept formation (both in language as well as in drawings), which can be used separately but which also overlap interestingly and complement each other in many respects. I have already presented detailed accounts of these theories in the Theory and Methodology chapters.

I firstly employ elements drawn from Halliday's functional grammar (Halliday, 1994), one of the sources for the social semiotic theory of literacy discussed in the Methodology chapter: in particular his notions of nominalisation and lexical density.

Secondly, I look at Vygotsky's theory of concept formation and his notions of spontaneous and scientific concepts. Here it will be interesting to observe how the grammatical structures Halliday describes in many ways map on to Vygotsky's (1986) categorization of concepts.

Thirdly, in relation to the storyboard drawings and the way concepts are expressed visually, the multimodal theory of social semiotics, presented again in the Methodology chapter, offers some useful insights as it looks at the relation between the visual and the spoken and written language and the motivations of the sign makers. Though I have presented this as an analytical methodology, and am using it as such, I also make use of it as a theory of semiotics.

It should be stressed in advance that the process of concept formation is far from being linear. Even when a term is used, it cannot be assumed that the corresponding concept is fully mastered; the children quite often will regress to earlier manifestations where the same concept will be expressed not as a single term but as a more extended combination of

words and linguistic formations, resembling the scheme Engestrom (1999) describes as 'expansive cycles'. We can attempt to examine some of the sentences more closely.

Here Myrto - one of the two girl protagonists - talks about what is happening at this particular moment in the film and what the camera should be doing:

MYRTO: 'We do a closeup of the Milo Bar first ... then it turns ... then we have a shot of the actors and then I enter and it sees us as I talk with Anna ...'

Myrto's expression 'we do a close up' is an example of nominalization, a characteristic of lexically dense language, in the way Halliday (1994) describes it. In this instance, Myrto takes a dynamic process in life - which would have been the camera movement - and she calls it a thing; as such, the process is represented as a noun. The verb ('do') is effectively empty of meaning and all the weight falls to the noun ('close up'). Linking this with Vygotsky's theory as suggested earlier, we could say that the term 'close up' is what Vygotsky (1986) describes as scientific concept.

Vygotsky has extensively described the stages of the concept formation process and his approach can contribute greatly to our understanding of how filmic concepts are acquired. His theory also helps us to identify how children oscillate between concepts that have been learned in everyday life, mainly as a result of children's exposure to media (and many filmic terms belong to that category such as shot, distance, scene - though we have to remember that they may have been given a different meaning by the children) and those that have been taught or further explained as part of a more formal teaching process in school.

If the scientific concepts are expressed in language in a lexically dense manner, we can equally observe in the same sentence what happens with

concepts that are not as yet solidified, concepts that the children might know of as 'actions' and notions but which have not been given a stable term by them as yet. When Myrto says '*it sees us as I talk with Anna*', this lexically sparse clause (which is low in nominalisation and higher in verb forms) reveals that although this process could be characterised as 'a dialogue between two people', no specific filmic term exists yet for the children. This means that they have not found a term to describe how they can talk about a dialogue between two people taking place in front of the camera. That might be due to their lack of experience or - on the contrary - it might be the fact that the children as viewers have acquired an extensive repertoire of the possibilities one has at their disposal to shoot a conversation depending on the context and that makes it difficult for them to decide how exactly they want the conversation framed.

Similar observations can be made about the teacher's talk in response to the children's understanding. At some point, I say:

KV: Now that we have the complete story you can do the order of the shots. That will be your guide for filming and then editing. Close your eyes and think: what do I want to shoot? What do I want the camera to 'see' at each moment? Is it a close up? Is it a pan?

Given that I can sense what they know by now and the terms they would find more difficult to understand in this passage, I opt for dynamic verbs and a more extended and elaborated word structure where the concepts remain static. I say 'what you want the camera to see at each moment' instead of 'how are you going to construct the point of view'. Clearly, where there is an easy concept or a concept already understood, I nominalise it whereas, when there is a difficult concept, I unpack it as part of a lexically sparse process where the verbs are the significant elements and then I return to the concept again. In this way, there is an oscillation between the two. This is what happens with the children as well and in that sense, this is an example of them being at the space between

what they can do for themselves and the things they can do with somebody else's help, what Vygotsky calls 'the zone of proximal development', which he defines as:

The distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978: 86).

The teacher knows that he can afford to use some terms because the children have come across them, and they are secure with those, and then lead them towards other terms that have to be unpacked if they are to be understood.

With regards to this, we observe therefore that in the case of the storyboards, the concepts are transformed into other modes, both visual and linguistic, and are also represented in the children's speech. This dynamic relationship between concept and practice is captured, as seen in the previous chapter, by Engestrom's (1999) theory of the expansive cycles, and it will be explored as a dialectical relationship in which the application in practice renders the concept more complex and challenge, sometimes at odds with the abstract linguistic expression of it.

6.2.2 Modes of design and modes of production

As the ongoing discussion reveals, the children are concerned - initially, at least - more with the aesthetic aspect of their storyboards rather than with any filmic issues proper.

MYRTO: Sir, are you collecting these? [the storyboards]

KV: Yes ... why?

MYRTO: I haven't done it very nicely

ANNA: Me too ... I'm not good at drawing. Look what I've done...

MYRTO: Can I see Aris' drawings?

ARIS: They are awful, not nice at all.

ARIS: Hmmm ... I've made Anna and Myrto look like a mess.

[Myrto is heard moaning at this comment].

ARIS: Well, I'm sorry... what can I do?

GIANNIS (commenting on Aris' drawing): He is not Picasso!

The above statements reveal the emphasis children place on the aesthetic dimension of the storyboards in the sense that they want them to be attractive and nice-looking, like any other artwork they make. Leaving aside for the moment the question of whether this is desirable and to what extent the focus on the aesthetic dimension is an obstacle to the process of storyboarding, the children's comments above reveal a kind of misunderstanding: the children view the storyboards as the final product for which every effort has to be made to ensure they look attractive. In Kress's terms, what they are doing is mistaking the design for the production. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) there are four domains of practice in which meanings are predominantly made: discourse, design, production and distribution. Design and production, which we are primarily concerned with here, are defined as follow: "Designs are (uses of) semiotic resources, in all semiotic modes and combinations of semiotic modes" (ibid: 4) whereas "Production refers to the organisation of the expression, to the actual material articulation of the semiotic event or the actual material production of the semiotic artefact" (ibid: 6).

Although the children are working on making a film, what they are actually doing at the moment is making drawings; they are not making a film. They are in the design stratum, and the modes involved are still pictures in the form of drawings and language, and the medium they use is paper, pencil and voice. In the production stage the medium that they are going to use will be film and the mode will be the moving image. So

the design modes we get are quite different from the production modes, though one translates into the other and residues of the design will continue to exist.

However, the main point is that lack of experience makes it difficult for children to distinguish the design from the production resulting in the comments mentioned above. If they were experienced filmmakers, they would know what filming and editing is going to look like and that would make a difference to the way they prepared the drawings. Remarks about how movement is indicated and how things are represented would not be included if they were experienced filmmakers and editors because they would be able to imagine what their drawings are going to turn into and draw them accordingly. The children cannot imagine how the design becomes the production and they are applying an evaluative framework at the stage of design when they constantly feel the need to comment on the 'niceness' of their work. Indeed, they are acting as if they are producing a work of art (and they evaluate their work as art) rather than providing instructions for a camera operator. Admittedly, they have to imagine something they have never done before, although there are certain points where they do imagine it:

ANNA: ... you take the little tape to the computer room, you can decide the order there... you click over there... and it goes first, second, third and stuff...

Here Anna starts to imagine the editing process and later on she understands that the sequence of the storyboard is not necessarily the sequence of filming but it will be the sequence of editing. In that, we begin to see their attempts to move from design to production.

6.2.3 From conceptual dissonance to a dialectic of concept and practice

On several occasions in these storyboards, a striking discrepancy can be observed between the types of shots drawn and their written description; in other words, many times the children do not draw the kind of shot they have just described in writing in the corresponding box.

As I have already noted, the storyboarding activity should be viewed as yet another arena where filmic concepts are being explored. In that light, it would have been easy to attribute these 'mistakes' to a lack of understanding of the concepts: the children are still struggling to find a functional 'definition' for the various types of shots and they often get it wrong. The problem is further intensified by the fact that with a storyboard, one has to create the desired frame from scratch by means of pen and paper whereas in filming all one would have to do is to use the camera's zoom function (or get physically closer or further away) to frame an existing subject, a part of the real world. As true as this may be, approaching these inconsistencies as simply mistakes does not provide us with a full answer. To begin with, we can identify at least two types of inconsistencies between drawings and their written descriptions in the storyboards.

The first kind concerns the shot proximity issue. We have to remember that in essence a storyboard asks for some 'significant moments' to be isolated from what will potentially be a succession of moving images and turn them into still pictures. This process is quite difficult for the children as they have to find ways to freeze motion and represent it in different ways, as we will see shortly. It therefore comes as no surprise to see the written parts of some of the storyboards containing descriptions that would be enough to fill two or three pictures. Equally, in some of the drawings, two or three different types of shots seem to have collapsed into a single picture as the children attempt to squeeze in as much action as possible. When for instance a boy appears at the entrance of the bar

and starts walking into the bar, which moment should be chosen from this whole action? Clearly, the children try to compromise and that results in the inconsistencies mentioned above: the labels indicating 'close-up' or 'long shot' do not accord with the drawn image which has been selected to represent a sequence.

Furthermore, (though this does not represent a conceptual discrepancy), since it is impossible to show movement in the drawings, the use of vectors (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) is employed. A vector is in effect the visual equivalent of an action verb. In this case, some children used arrows to indicate the direction a person moves towards or an object being placed or taken away from a certain position (see Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.2 below) and it is interesting to note that they did so without copying this from each other as they were working individually.

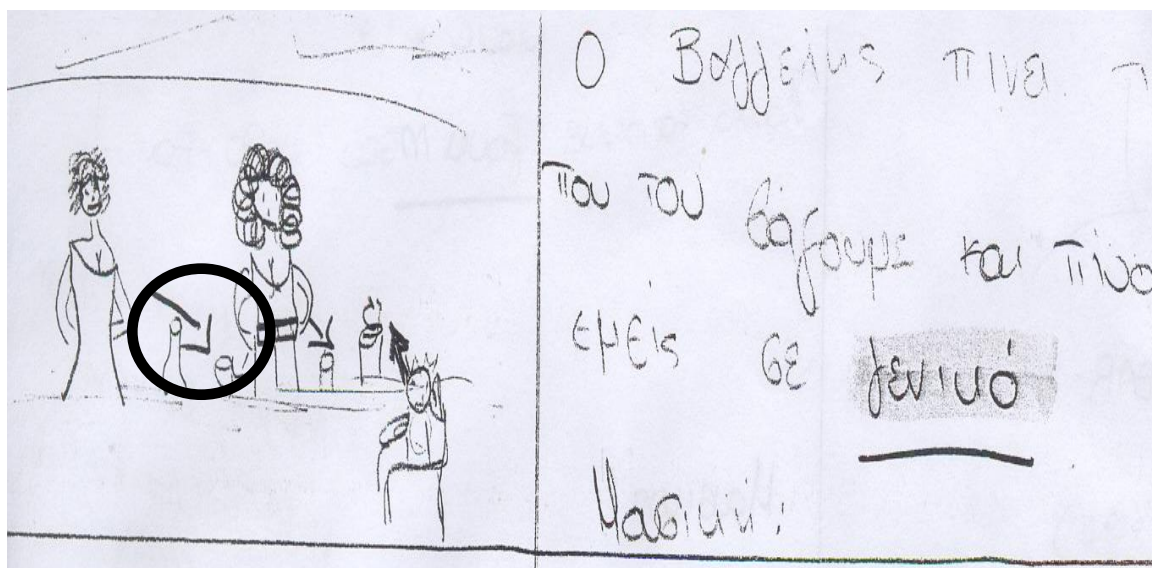


Figure 6.1: Use of vectors. Arrow indicating barmaid's hand about to pick up the glass and serve the customer (from Myrto's Storyboard 3B).

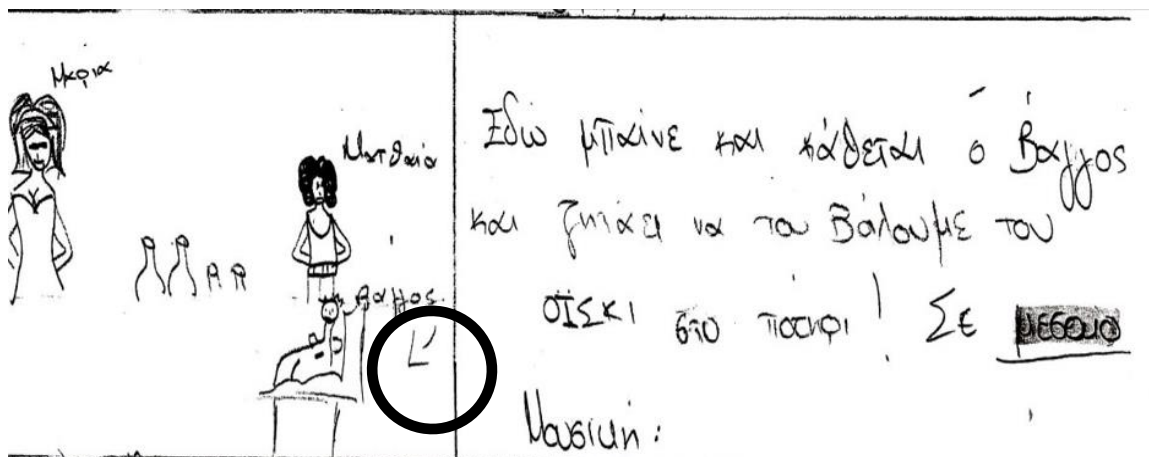


Figure 6.2: Use of vectors. Arrow indicating customer entering the bar and sitting down (from Myrto's Storyboard 3A).

In another case (Figure 6.3), in order to indicate movement, small, curved lines have been drawn round the belly of a girl who in the story stood up to do a belly-dance.

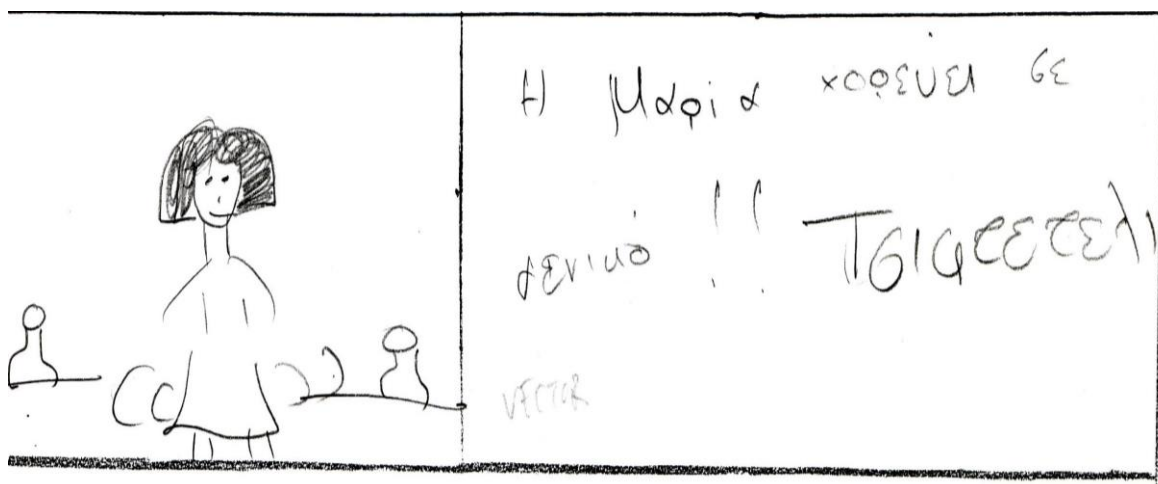


Figure 6.3: Use of curved lines to indicate movement (belly dance) (from Anna's Storyboard 4).

The drawing of the belly-dance here is a representation of the performance of gender, a 'typically feminine' type of action. It is a performance of girlhood and womanhood but interestingly here in the form of visual representation. In this highly performative and dramatic action we are observing echoes of Butler's (1999) claim that gender is the repeated stylization of the body which reinforces the - female in this case - sense of identity. In Butler's own words:

The effect of gender is produced through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and styles of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self (Butler, 1999: 179).

The second kind of dissonance, I would identify as one that results from the interference of 'external' elements into the body of storyboarding *per se*. In this kind, it is notable in the girls' storyboards that they are introducing different information which in a way changes the emphasis - and even contradicts the emphasis of what the action of that moment would call for. As such, the girls are promoting the representation of themselves, a point that has been made elsewhere in the chapter.

The most striking examples of this type are in particular two instances in Myrto's storyboard. In one of them, whereas the text reads 'Myrto appears in long shot cleaning', what we actually see in the corresponding drawing is her face in close up. Here the notion of *salience* Kress (2001: 212) talks about, can shed more light: "Salience can create a hierarchy of importance among the elements, selecting some as more important, more worthy of attention than others".

From a multimodal point of view, it is the girl who is the salient theme here, and this is so by virtue of her being at the centre and the front of the picture with the lack of any background. Clearly there is a social motivation behind the salient image of the girl and that seems to be the girls wanting themselves to look prominent. We observe again here Butler's idea of performativity, with the girls clearly performing gender in these drawings, repeating acts that - even though only in visual format here - reinforce again their sense of identity. This idea is being asserted by Cameron who quotes Butler (1999) to say that becoming a woman (or a man) is not something you accomplish once and for all at an early stage

of life. Cameron (1997: 49) further extends this argument by claiming that

Gender has constantly to be reaffirmed and publicly displayed by repeatedly performing particular acts in accordance with the cultural norms (themselves historically and socially constructed, and consequently variable) which define 'masculinity' and 'femininity'.

Another way of looking at the performance of gender is provided by Cara Wallis through the theoretical construct of 'gender display' that she puts forward. Wallis (2011: 161) considers gender displays as "tertiary sexual characteristics (that are) learned and socially created". She specifically draws on Goffman (1976) who defines gender displays as the "conventionalized portrayals" of the "culturally established correlates of sex" (ibid.: 1).

Wallis further argues that gender displays can be thought of as codes that distinguish the way men and women participate in social situations. Such depictions of masculinity and femininity are socially acquired, patterned, used, and understood in relationship to others. As Goffman (1976: 8) again notes, "One might just as well say there is no gender identity. There is only a schedule for the portrayal of gender. ... What, if anything, characterizes persons as sex-class members is their competence and willingness to sustain an appropriate schedule of displays". Wallis (2011: 161) comments on the above statement, arguing that

To Goffman, our gendered behaviour, as well as our concepts of masculinity and femininity, are scripts that are dictated by our environment that we consciously and unconsciously learn and perform in order to play our appropriate roles in society.

Indeed, the idea of 'schedule of displays' is particularly useful in explaining the performance of gender in these instances of the storyboards with the girls enacting 'typically female' roles – also to be

depicted later in their video production. This time though, this performance can be ambiguous. Is this a performance about girl power or is it about the reproduction of female stereotypes such as barmaids, dancers and cleaners? Therefore, the idea of the 'schedule of displays' - useful as it may be, as already stated - ought to be taken with certain caution as it can lead to a view which implies that these girls have no agency and they are helplessly reproducing these stereotypical images. We know that the performance of gender is based on an unconscious learning of particular scripts, as Goffman is arguing, but commentators such as Pelletier (2007, 2008) and Richards (2012), mentioned in the previous chapter, argue convincingly that there is a good level of creative agency in the experimentation with these scripts and the ways young people use them to construct their own identities.

Salience, therefore, gets in the children's way and prevails here over the 'appropriate re-presentation of the concept', which is pushed aside, almost forgotten. In fact, in the second of the two images under discussion, this tension between them wanting to show themselves and the need for a long shot at that point in the film becomes apparent resulting in a 'compromised' drawing with the two girls in close up in front of a wide background of the 'Milo Bar' where the adjacent box reads 'Myrto and Anna appear in long shot cleaning'. Clearly, the two are saying different things: where the writing is all about distance, the drawing is not enunciating a long shot concept, but rather is showing that the most important thing in this semiotic ensemble is self-representation. In relation to this, it is worth noting that although the writing may well be about shot proximity, the way the actual sentence is structured reveals a different type of salience which supports the salience identified in the drawing: placing their names - 'Myrto and Anna' - at the beginning of the sentence 'Myrto and Anna appear in long shot cleaning', states once again that as far as they are concerned, they are the salient elements here and

not the shot types the teacher asked for. We have to remember that the location of grammatical items within a sentence is far from accidental, as Halliday reminds us with his notions of 'Theme' and 'Rheme', where the 'Theme' of the clause is located at the beginning of the sentence (Halliday, 1994).

Looking at the storyboards in more detail, we can identify other types of salience as well. Probably the most characteristic one is the use of underlined and capital letters when the children describe types of shots. In these, the children are implying things like: 'that's the concept you taught us' or 'we are learning this concept and here is the concept and here is the word'. We can also see names of people written above their heads and pointed to with arrows (Figure 6.4). Here it is interesting to note that although in the actual film the children had given themselves fictional names, in the storyboards they use their real names pointing again to the fact that in the drawing, which is a medium with a higher level of immediacy for them than the film, at least at the moment, it comes more naturally to them to present themselves as they really are. In some of the storyboards, arrows above people and objects can be observed that indicate 'this is the one' (Figure 6.4)

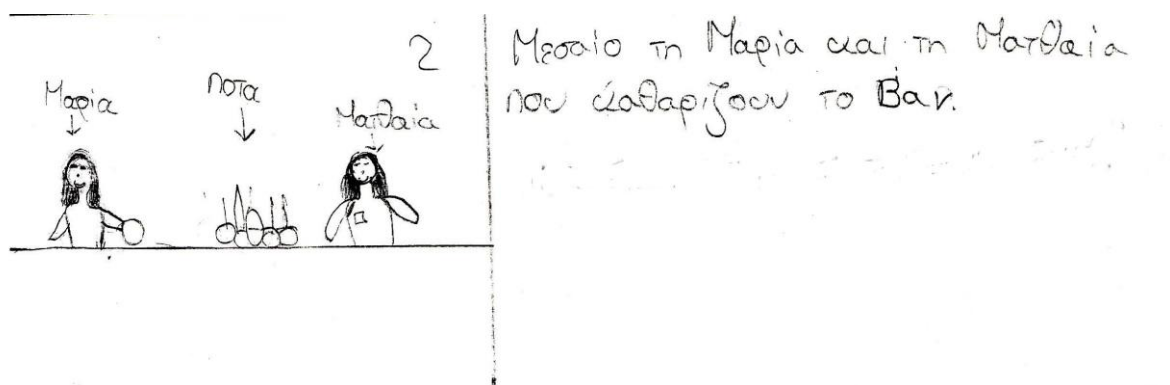


Figure 6.4: Use of arrows to indicate persons and objects (from Anna's Storyboard 4)

as well as encircled objects that acquire a prominence in the drawing not given in the writing (Figure 6.5).

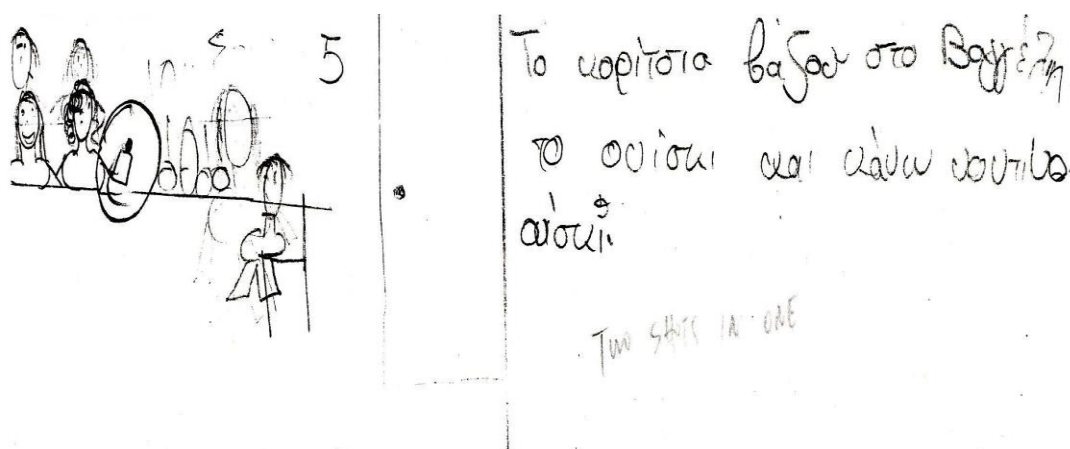


Figure 6.5: Drawing circles around objects to indicate focus and prominence (from Anna's Storyboard 4).

Finally, the drawing of the tiny boy in relation to the blown-up girl characters (seen not just once but in two different instances– Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.2 above –making it thus almost a recurring pattern) could again be attributed to a mistake in visualising the actual perspective of the human bodies but the fact that it has happened a number of times most probably signifies the girl-power factor, which was very dominant throughout the project: the girls wish to indicate their presence and agency both in the domain of making decisions in the real life of the video construction but also in the realm of the fictional characters they will adopt.

A note on the use of the notion of 'girl power' is needed here therefore. Indeed, the term has been popularised in productive ways that go nevertheless beyond the scope of this thesis. More specifically, 'girl power' "has come to signify the personal power of individual girls to pursue an unlimited future and, perhaps as a consequence, also to signal anxiety that girls are now being favoured over boys" (Currie, Kelly and Pomerantz, 2009: 20).

In the context of this thesis, the idea of 'girl power' is rather used in a more modest and 'localised' way: to indicate the prominent roles as well as the processes and choices that the two protagonist girls in the project employed in orchestrating the parameters of the productions assigned to them. Nevertheless - and "while girl power's reign of cultural dominance, which began in the mid-1990s, may be waning today" (Keller, 2014: 142) - we cannot underestimate the cultural significance that the discourses of girl power - which, incidentally, thrive on paradoxes - have in shaping girls' sense of gender identity and their interpretations of it. As such, it is crucial, following on from Currie, Kelly and Pomerantz (2009), to distinguish between 'girlhood' as a cultural ideal, and girls as the embodied agents through which girlhood becomes a social accomplishment - a stance that this thesis is also advocating.

In summary, then, the storyboards display the process of concept development, the complexity of its formation across different modes of design (speech, drawing and writing), and its relation to identity and self-representation as well as the construction of a fictional narrative. They also reveal an apparent dissonance between the abstract concept and its realisation in visual terms: though we will see in the following section that this represents a stage in a dialectic process between concept and material production, captured in some ways by Engestrom's (1999) 'cycles of expansive learning'.

6.3 Analysis of the video

This section refers to the final movie the children produced. Four of the initial participants carried on working here, and indeed acting: Myrto, Anna, Aris and Stella. Between them, they also operated the camera and did the other auxiliary tasks such as the 'Milo Bar' drawing, setting the

set, make-up and choosing clothes. Given the plot of the story though, Myrto and Anna were constantly present on stage and hence they carried out less of the filmic tasks with no camera operation duties in particular. Nevertheless, this is something that they didn't seem to be too concerned about, preferring rather to act and leave most – though not all – filming to the boy, Aris. This observation on roles differentiation confirms to some extent the gendered nature of school film production, as Drotner (1989: 210) has also observed in similar projects:

Both boys and girls initially saw video as a technical and hence a male medium. Not unexpectedly, I found that without adult direction the boys would take charge of the lighting, the props, and the camerawork. Pia never meddled with technical details but was a keen actress. ... I took these differences as yet another proof of male dominance.

The gender differences were also evident in the shooting part and Drotner goes on to offer similar descriptions of the situations I also encountered: "Here, the girls were generally most explicit about intimate emotions The boys used a wider range of bodily expressions, jumping about, laughing loudly, and gesturing wildly" (Drotner, 1989: 212). As a general observation, the girls seemed to restrain themselves from putting their ideas into action. Unlike the boys, they first wanted to rehearse what to say, when to move, and how to leave the scenes. As such, the girls differentiated between talk and action. Drotner (1989: 212) puts this down to "a specific pleasure in language that is nurtured in many girls' upbringing, and which is central to their relations to one another in adolescence".

It has to be stressed though that this allocation of tasks concerned mainly the practical aspects of camera operation and filming; decisions about types of shots, camera movements and other decisions that had to be made on the spot continued to be made collectively by the group. Again though, even this activity entailed gendered differences which were

apparent also in group discussions over small exercise productions as well as in the planning of the final video production. These differences concerned mainly aesthetic decisions and Drotner sees them as opportunities for both genders to transcend their respective boundaries and widen their experiences: "for boys, the widening of aesthetic contents may be the most important challenge to traditional masculine roles, while for girls, the contexts of aesthetic production may prove the most decisive" (Drotner, 1989: 212).

As explained above, there were also three students acting out small roles as extras. These students were related to the children that made the production in different ways: the younger sister of one of them, the close buddy of another. The editing was done by the main four actors, although with Myrto and Anna clearly dominating again and making most of the decisions. Surprisingly, some editing sessions were attended (intermittently) by the two other boys from the previous stage of the project (Giannis and Renalnto) who didn't participate very much in the video though.

The movie can be broken down into five large syntagms, each consisting of a number of shots (total duration 2 minutes and 52 seconds, with 20 shots in total). In turn, each big syntagm can be broken down into smaller mini-syntagms within it, some set up by the filming and some by the editing, some by the music and some by the background.

- The first syntagm is in effect the introduction to the movie and it is comprised of a single shot (duration 4 sec.).
- The second syntagm begins from 00:04 to 01.11 (7 shots, duration 1 min 7 sec.).
- The third runs from 01.12 to 01.51 (3 shots, duration 39 sec.).
- The fourth is from 01.51 to 02.26 which is the end of the actual movie (9 shots, duration 37 sec.).

- The fifth and final syntagm constitute of the closing titles of the movie (34 sec.) with the accompanying music which runs for no less than two and a half minutes onto a black screen.

Deciding exactly which sections of a film constitute a syntagm is not always clear cut. Hodge and Tripp note that 'what is taken to constitute a syntagm depends upon the level of analysis ... The term syntagm is a conceptual unit of analysis for which there are no set dimensions of complexity or duration' (Hodge and Tripp, 1986: 21). This difficulty is not a 'deficiency' of the theory but rather derives from the very nature of the medium. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) make also the point about visual media as having strong lexis but weak grammar. One has to be very specific about the images, the visual lexicon, in a way not found in language which is lexically weak but grammatically strong. When it comes to visual grammar though, things can become much vaguer as pictures contain more conceptual content than words.

The criterion employed to identify at least the big syntagms in this video is mainly the unity of action of particular groups of shots, thus corresponding roughly to a scene. Metz (1974) has noted that the change in the circumstances and the move to another phase of the action is often signalled by the use of strong punctuational devices (effects and graphics). In this film there were at least two instances of effects which clearly indicated change of action thus allowing us to break the syntagms at those very points. These will be discussed below.

6.3.1 First syntagm – opening sequence

(1) 00.00 - 00.04: The opening scene shows in medium shot the drawing the children made, in quite fine detail. It depicts the background, the back wall of the bar with the shelves where the spirits are kept.



Figure 6.6: Opening shot and background of 'Milo Bar'

The names of the spirits appear quite clearly on some of the bottles: vodka, margarita, even the locally produced 'raki', suggesting knowledge of the spirits consumed by adults on the part of the children and a sense of naturalistic representation. In so doing, they depict the objects exactly as they have known them to be in real bars with no attempt to change anything or insert extraneous elements in their depictions. This can be thought of as a claim in 'naturalistic modality', in Kress and van Leeuwen's terms, which they define as the degree of correspondence "between the visual representation of an object and what we normally see of that object with the naked eye" (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 158).

Inside this 'wall' of shelves and bottles, and almost at the centre of it, a big pink apple has been drawn. In the middle of the apple drawing it

reads 'MHAO-BAR' (pronounced 'Milo' which means 'apple' in Greek). The film is also called 'Milo Bar'. From this initial freeze-frame medium shot lasting almost two seconds the camera zooms further into a close up of the same drawing. This zoom-in suggests a closer attention on the title and in effect on the 'content' of the film.

The opening sequence in a programme may be a microcosm of the bigger story: the background of the characters as well as essential information about the story in a highly compressed form is shown at a fast pace preceding the actual story. Hodge and Tripp (1986: 23) remark (referring to cartoons in particular): "This two-part structure is a well-established convention for adult as well as children's television series". This structure does not seem to occur in this film. We need to ask ourselves why this is. Could it be because this film is of a different genre than cartoons and conventionally things like that are not shown in this kind of (action?) film? In other words, is it a generic convention that the children are aware of? Most likely it seems to be the fact that regardless of the genre, this film was meant to be not an episode in a series but a one-off, single story with no history to show and, in all probabilities, with no future. Equally there are not many clues yet as to what genre of film this is going to be. To a certain extent, again that reflects the fact that even the children themselves hadn't thought clearly at this stage what kind of story they wanted and they were rather working the story out as they were going along. The final story hadn't been worked out in the storyboard due to a number of reasons: some disagreements broke out among the young creators as to the direction of the film, implicitly about their egos, who was going to do what and who would appear for most on the film. But there were more pragmatic reasons as well. Time was one of them, which in conjunction with a burst of creativity that the film sparked, posed an obstacle. But it also true that the inspiration children exhibit these days as a result of their expanded exposure to media works sometimes

counterproductively for their productions as they are unsure which story to follow.

I would define this opening sequence (constituted by a single shot) as a synchronic syntagm because it has been designed as a still image: its elements do not move or alter; indeed, it is a construction made within the technology of drawing which is about spatial and visual design.

Naturally, the drawing remains 'still' and unchanged over the unfolding of the story though obviously there is a lot going on in front of it. It was made to operate as the background of the setting, and it is there throughout the film, at least whenever the action is taking place in the front part of the bar. On the other hand, there are scenes where the action was taking place in different sections of the classroom-bar for which no other special provision regarding the setting or the background had been made other than removing any objects that could have been an obstacle; we can still see though how a synchronic syntagm in the background is articulated with other syntagms in the foreground. Nevertheless, the use of the 'Milo Bar' background drawing here acts more like an establishing shot which, although it does not show much of the area in the same way establishing shots conventionally do, it still sets the location for the viewer through the word that appears in the drawing ('bar') leaving little doubt as to where we are.

Similarly, though its subsequent role after the introduction is quite clear (to carry on acting as the background), that is not necessarily the case with the opening sequence. Since we haven't seen the rest of the film at this point we don't know whether the drawing –made initially with the aim, as stated above, to operate as the background: every establishment, let alone a bar, has a certain background, and a 'landmark' that characterizes it – was purposely made to act simply as an introductory

marker appearing thus once or it is the background of a particular location that is going to appear again. As it turned out in this film both roles are present. The drawing was initially designed to act as the background but later on it was decided to be used also as the opening titles of the film. And although that decision was only made at the last minute allegedly for convenience reasons (had there been more time available they would have made electronic titles of some sort as some of the children said during the discussion that followed) I would nevertheless challenge that – linking it thus with similar claims I will be making elsewhere throughout the analysis of this film, and arguing that the choice was not simply arbitrary or a matter of convenience. Drawing as a resource derives in some ways from theatre design, and the actual practice of drawing here fits very well with the theatrical and ‘handmade’ feeling that permeates this film and the work around it and that is in all probabilities the rationale behind choosing it. In that respect the painting, as it stands, still manages to encapsulate what the film is about.

Drawing from the instance of the opening sequence here, we can detect an emerging extended function for the synchronic syntagm in general: the initial drawing that plays the role of an establishing shot of course can be a synchronic syntagm, an element of one shot, one frame even. But it can also run behind the whole film and in this way it acquires a kind of temporality if anything because it starts ‘moving’ by virtue of being part of a moving image. In doing so, it can coexist and interact with the other syntagms that run alongside it: movement, action, speech, music as well as the syntagmatic decisions about filming and editing. So what we have here is an articulation of several layers which are all present and which are foregrounded and backgrounded and prioritised; some conscious, some unconscious.

As the camera ends its zooming-in and pauses in a freeze frame lasting a couple of seconds, the voice of one of the girls (Myrto) comes on announcing the movie's title: 'Milo Bar'. Though having the title of the film spoken out adds very little to the understanding a spectator may already have of this as being the title of the movie (the drawing already had the words 'Milo Bar' written on it and conventionally film titles are not spoken), narrated by a human voice it nevertheless imposes a sense of authority and agency, stating almost that 'this is our film'.

The voice sounds 'fresh', pronunciation is clear and confident, the words are stressed. A slightly 'pretentious' tone that may sound unusual from her everyday, normal voice, could be attributed to the fact that this is considered by them as a serious, 'arty' exercise and maybe it is not coincidence that, as found out in an interview later with Myrto, she had recently taken part in a radio advertisement for their school play which involved narration of a short script which apparently had to be repeated a number of times to get it right. This can also be thought of as another instance of Goffman's (1956) 'presentation of self' as Myrto employs an array of attributes, in this case related to voice and language, to enact a persona that has chosen for this particular play.

The music chosen by the children – particularly by the two dominant girls who insisted on its inclusion – not only is indeed an appropriate piece, signifying a moment of calmness before the storm that is about to come but it exhibits the girls' determination to have their voice and choice heard, particularly concerning a medium for which they can claim strong affiliation with as well as cultural knowledge. It is a mainly instrumental dance piece with a slight Latin flavour called 'Let the Sun Shine' which repeats these words from time to time. It is indeed a very appropriate piece of music considering that the film was shot towards the end of June on the hottest Greek island and very likely also reflects the mood of the

children at the given time. Similarly to the picture of the bar earlier, it can also be regarded as a musical background syntagm. This music piece runs throughout the first part of the video until the jolly mood is disrupted by the appearance of the potential thief which results in a change of music to mark the incident. The music in this first part was meant to be diegetic, according to the two protagonist girls that chose it (Myrto and Anna), coming from the bar's sound system and in their minds (and probably in the viewers' minds) that is the case, although no radio or other music device appears in the film. The combination of the camera framing for the drawing, the girl's tone of voice and the particular music set the scene for a very interesting film to follow indeed. This multimodal ensemble of vocal performance, framing, visual representation and musical tonality successfully enacts the children's intentions for the narrative.

6.3.2 Second syntagm – setting the scene

The second big syntagm I would characterize as diachronic, as its elements move and develop over time.

(2) 00.04 - 00.09:

The first shot of the actual film (Figure 6.7) shows the two girls, the barmaids, played by Myrto and Anna, behind the bar cleaning the glasses and preparing for the customers to come.



Figure 6.7: Barmaids discussing the day's schedule for the bar

The mode of dramatized speech includes their conversation, largely improvised, which centres around the issue of what they can do to improve the clientele and liven the place up. The orchestrating mode of filming is constructed by Aris who films in medium shot with the camera in a straight-on angle. The girls are moving to their left and right as they lean to get the things they need for the cleaning. Aris follows with the camera and moves it accordingly left and right in small pans. The medium shot used here is quite appropriate as it reveals the setting and the background, showing what the girls are doing. Aris, and the camera by extension, are acting as a proxy for the imagined viewer here, allowing them to pay attention to the discussion at the same time.

(3) 00.10 - 00.14: Cut to a long shot (Figure 6.8) of the entrance of the bar filmed from the inside. The cut was actually created in the editing, by Myrto and Anna, and was one of the shots thought of in advance and

appearing in the storyboard. Their intention here is to indicate a marker of narrative progression, along with a shift in spatial orientation.



Figure 6.8: First customer (Vaggelis) enters the bar

We see a customer, played by Vaggelis - a Year 6 boy who helped with playing this role in the video - walking in. He must be a regular as the two protagonist girls (Myrto and Anna) recognize him immediately and greet him by his name, Vaggelis. If there is anything in peoples' first names that within a given culture conventionally associates them with particular 'types' of people, then the choice of this name for the male character implies a rather folk type. It is interesting also to observe that the girl who greets the customer, Myrto, adopts a deliberately Greek 'village/folk' accent in her voice stressing a particular consonant ('l', found both in the boy's name - Vaggelis; again an indication that it was not picked up at random - as in other words with the same sound that she uses) that

makes this easily recognisable. As this is not her own natural accent, Myrto appears competent in the knowledge and use of the regional language and accent conventions.

This accent and voice act as markers of identity and trigger a series of assumptions about who she is and which part of the country she is coming from. D. Cameron offers some suggestions here that help us to think more closely about what is happening in this instance in terms of gender identity: drawing from Butler who, as we have seen earlier, claims that "Gender is the repeated stylization of the body" (Butler, 1999: 33), she extends the debate arguing that "this 'performative' model sheds an interesting light on the phenomenon of gendered speech. *Speech too* is a repeated stylization of the body" (Cameron, 1997: 49, my emphasis). We are seeing in the girls' use of their voices therefore that gender is performed repeatedly in speech over time too and that speech is also a factor that contributes to the congealing of gender.

Moreover, these markers serve narrative purposes as well: they are easily recognisable by the children and the actors for what they are and make them respond accordingly given that there were moments in the story that were improvised on the spot and the children required some cues from each other in order to carry the narrative forward.

Within the contributory modes of dramatic action and speech, Myrto is playing a role – not a 'presentation of 'self', yet associated with self – with her experience, culture and interests. This appears to be what play theorist Roger Caillois (1961), calls 'the game of mimicry' (involving role play, dressing up, and a sense of carnival). In turn, this can be read in different ways: Firstly, in relation to identity as well as to drama: play, the presentation of self and mimicry, all relate to the dramatic performance of gender. Indeed, it is specifically a mimicry of gender, the

role play of gender and the dramatization of that gender in the sense that Butler talks about it as performative acts that constitute and reinforce one's own sense of gender identity. Secondly, it is also related to the characterization of New Media Literacy by Jenkins et al. (2007) as playful, as mentioned already in Chapters 2 and 5 and will be mentioned again in the Discussion in Chapter 7.

The camera, operated by Aris, follows the customer with a left pan as he walks towards the two girls and right up until he sits down on a chair near them. As he is still walking towards the girls and while in a medium shot, the camera starts to zoom-in on what appears to be a close up. Aris, the cameraperson, thought that we needed to be introduced to the new character properly, to get to know him better but as he was doing this he realised that the customer was moving and coming out of frame. As he couldn't also control the autofocus, the cameraperson quickly zoomed out to get the customer back in frame. The final frame of this shot is eventually a long one with the two barmaids behind the bar and the customer just sitting on the chair in front of them. Again, the whole scene is filmed from an eye-level position. The 'mistake' with the autofocus points to two considerations: firstly, that knowledge of technical skills and competences is essential for the production of an articulate image and that these have to be learned always in connection with what it is the children want to communicate. On another level though, as with the storyboard previously, this represents an instance of a partially grasped idea, of a conceptual frame (shot distance) translated into action in a moment of crisis, as it were, where decisions had to be made on the spot given the unexpected movement of the actors.

The instance could also be represented as a move from a dissonant relationship between concept and practice, to thinking of it as a dialectic, cyclical process in which practice extends, complexifies and develops the

simple concept and whereby theory and practice connect. Following from such understanding, we can say that there is yet evidence of learning in the 'mistake', if viewed through the prism of the conceptual cycle that Engestrom (1999) describes.

(4) 00.15 - 00.17: Where the camera was left at the previous shot would have made it difficult to follow the conversation between the three people which is about to start, as all we would have been able to see would have been the back of the customer. The children realised this and in this shot (Figure 6.9) the camera has moved to a different angle to allow us to see the customer's face in a medium shot as he is asking the barmaids for a drink.



Figure 6.9: Customer (Vaggelis) orders his first drink

This shot, constructed by Aris, is seen from a slightly tilted angle with the camera looking from slightly higher up – maybe a shot and angle that

'diminishes' the customer a bit as if it is anticipating his fate and what is going to happen to him in a minute. The shot is connected with the following one, in which the girls' edit constructs the alteration of camera angles.

(5) 00.18 - 00.31: The girls' reaction needs now to be seen, therefore to continue the previous shot wouldn't have been appropriate. The camera cuts then into a long shot (Figure 6.10) from the same angle and distance as the previous one so that we can see all three people as they talk and the girls serve the customer.



Figure 6.10: Customer (Vaggelis) asks for a second drink

Though their intention was to produce a shot /reverse shot they ended up having a (otherwise nicely composed) juxtaposition of two shots marginally exceeding the 30-degree rule avoiding thus to make it a complete jump-cut. But, again, it is clear that the intention is there:

change of focus in the people participating in the dialogue equals change of shot. This is the first clear instance where the children use elements of the continuity system to construct a piece of narrative and the first instance of a more creative use of the medium which at least breaks away from the mere 'reproductional' nature their earlier attempt (in the 'before' stage) exhibited. As Metz reminds us

The cinema was not a specific 'language' from its inception. Before becoming the means of expression familiar to us, it was a simple means of mechanical recording, preserving, and reproducing moving visual spectacles - whether of life, of the theatre, or even of small mises-en-scene, which were specially prepared and which, in the final analysis, remained theatrical- in short, a 'means of reproduction'. Now, *it was precisely to the extent that the cinema confronted the problems of narration* that, in the course of successive gropings, it came to produce a body of specific signifying procedures (Metz, 1974: 94, his emphasis).

To note in passing here that there might be some value in examining the early filmmakers' attempts in order to find analogies with the ways the children experiment with the medium. In this instance, the children, faced with the problem of how to move the narration forward and using part of the knowledge they acquired earlier through the teaching, seem to devise a reasonable solution. Though not fully familiar with the shot/reverse shot convention, they are clearly moving towards that direction. The sequence including this and the previous shot could also be thought of as a diachronic syntagm which is constructed by editing (the 'nearly' shot/reverse shot pattern). This move constitutes an example in practice of a midway point between the Vygotskian spontaneous and scientific concept; and, more pointedly, of (again) Engestrom's cyclical move between concept and concrete realization of it, suggesting thus a dialectical relationship between concept and practice.

(6) 00.32 - 00.47: As the three enjoy their drinks (the girls decided to have a drink themselves with the customer after having warned him not

to get drunk yet again) two more customers, two girls, walk in (Figure 6.11). One of them is Stella. Although she always comes to school dressed in a t-shirt and jeans, here she has made a special effort to look nice wearing a velvet dress.



Figure 6.11: Two more customers enter the bar

At this point, the camera is being operated by Aris who picks them up in a long shot from the bar's entrance and he follows them with a pan as they get to the bar to order their drinks. As they order we can still see the first customer ordering extra drinks. After the two newcomer girls have ordered their whiskies (probably the most popular, 'hard', 'adult' drink consumed in Greece) they walk to the back to sit at one of the tables with the camera following them in a right pan until they are seated.

The function of the dramatic mode - increasingly found to be a key element in the literacy events (Street, 2003) observed in the study - is

conveyed here in speech and action and manifested in terms of identity play. It indicates particularly the aspirational nature of children's play as they imagine themselves as adults (Willett, 2011).

(7) 00.48 - 00.52: The camera operator cuts back to the three people because in the meanwhile the customer has got drunk. In this long shot (Figure 6.12) we see him lying on his chair almost unconscious with his head back while the girls gesture to each other as they wonder what to do with him.



Figure 6.12: Customer (Vaggelis) getting drunk and passing out

The dramatic mode is again fully unfolded here and is being realised through such means as play, role-play, generic action and humour (the last being exhibited vividly by the two inventive protagonists).

(8) 00.53 - 1.11: The intention here is that one of the girls will lift the customer up from his chair (where he has been laying in a semi-conscious state and position), escort him out and carry him home. If that was shot from the same angle as the previous shot it would mean that the focus of the action would get lost, getting instead the boy's back. So here the camera operator, Aris, had to move the camera again to allow us to see the action without any destruction and the scene is shot in a medium shot from eye-level (Figure 6.13).



Figure 6.13: Barmaid (Anna) escorting customer (Vaggelis) out of the bar

The camera follows one of the two girls, Anna, in a continuous pan as she stands up from her chair behind the bar to get to the customer and carries him out of the room. Once again, this is an example of an occasion in the production process that combines the prior learning of framing and shot construction with the kind of 'just-in-time' learning which Gee (2007) describes. We are observing, again, a dynamic and dialectical cycle

between the abstract idea and the concrete realization of it. There are certain allusions here with the idea of the 'dynamic literacies' (Potter and MacDougall, 2017), although in our case the term takes a more situated and localized meaning.

6.3.3 Third syntagm – building the tension

(9) 01.12 - 01.14: Anna walked out with the customer at the end of the last shot with the intention of taking him home. Between this and the next shot which shows her returning some time later nothing has actually happened in the bar. In the absence of any parallel action (and shots!) the children were left with these two shots: Anna walking out with the customer and her returning on her own. Since they wanted to indicate that some time had elapsed but thinking - as said in their discussion afterwards - that it would seem illogical for the girl to return immediately after she had escorted the customer home and in the absence, as I also noticed, of any parallel action shots, the children opted in the editing for a different idea in order to fill the gap: They decided to indicate the passing of time by inserting an effect between the two shots achieved in the editing suite: out of a purple background, a star in bright red colour 'emerges' fast that writes in the middle '10 minutes later' (Figure 6.14).



Figure 6.14: Effect with caption reading 'Ten minutes later'

It is very much a cartoon-like design which involves movement (the star 'emerges' from the background) rather than being a static image (although it ends up in a still for the last second or so). In terms of function (and less so in terms of actual design) it operates in a way similar to that of the intertitles used in silent movies. It fills a gap that cannot be told strictly visually. As Hodge and Tripp (1986: 24) remark "words can convey concepts like time and causality more directly than pictures". This practice of titling as a compensatory way of one mode to accomplish what cannot be said in another mode, has also been detected in other children's productions, as Burn and Parker (2003) indicate with reference to the skateboarders' film they analyse. But if in the case of silent movies inter-titles represented the limitations of the medium in those early times (lack of sound), here it is used to compensate rather for the lack of appropriate footage. In any case it was quite a clever way to

fill that gap especially if we consider that the children were confronted with this problem and they realised the 'mistake' during the editing without having been taught anything related to this previously.

(10) 01.15 - 01.23: The barmaid, Anna, returns and the camera operator follows her with a left pan in a medium shot (Figure 6.15), as she walks from the door to the bar to prepare for serving the two other customer who have been waiting patiently in their table. The dance music carries on in the background.



Figure 6.15: Barmaids resume preparations around bar

In this scene we can observe the movement of the girls as they move around, behind their desk, preparing the drinks for the customers. As they move busily, filling with their bodies the entire frame, they cross each other and they change direction (firstly they face each other, then

they move in opposite directions) forming an ensemble that flows in an almost choreographic way. That creates a very powerful composition and echoes what Bordwell and Thompson (2006: 152) call *frontality* (noting also that it recalls the customs of theatrical staging). As movement is a good signifier of agency, the girls' constant movement, indicates their dominance in everything, the fact that they are in control. It is also a good example demonstrating how the combination of mise-en-scene elements with cinematography can convey the message in the way Bordwell and Thompson discuss: the girls' moving around (the 'behaviour of the figures') is filmed in a medium shot (the 'framing of the shot'), a framing that captures their bodies quite 'tightly', filling in that way the whole picture. Though the filming and the movement here are only partly planned (the actual type of shot had been more or less decided in advance but the exact movement of the girls was created on the spot and the camera person had to follow accordingly) it still results in this interesting composition. My provisional explanation for that here is that once the children are 'in' the production a certain level of their cultural experience is being activated and comes to the fore and guides them to some extent in bringing improvised elements into already planned elements. This refers to a series of aesthetic choices and orientations embedded in these children (and anybody living in a certain culture really) that come out as decisions on the spot. Clearly, things like that do not happen everywhere and all the time and there are clearly 'mistakes' that cannot be explained despite the above reasoning.

(11) 01.24 - 01.31: The camera operator changes the position of the camera and with a cut he now constructs a brief close up of Anna pouring the drinks into the glasses, taken from a high angle (Figure 6.16).



Figure 6.16: Barmaid (Anna) preparing drinks for new customers

Though not a very smooth match with the previous shot (we haven't quite seen the beginning of this action), it constitutes nevertheless a quite appropriate shot for the kind of action depicted. It is the first of a total of three close ups in this video – none of them existed in their 'before' video. Shot separately and inserted during editing within a longer shot that indicated continuous action, its use suggests that the children have started to realise that a continuous action can still be filmed as a series of shots, thereby making full use of the possibilities of editing which we painstakingly went through during our lessons. This seems to be evidence, then, that in the dynamic relationship between the abstract concepts (of shot angle and shot sequence) and the complex practicalities of managing space and time in the physical environment, the children are managing the progression from concept to practice with greater control. It is also an example of hypotaxis and of the dialectic process in which the

idea of editing just as a sequence (paratactic) become hypotactic in order to solve an immediate problem. We are seeing again that the dialectic between concept and practice is dynamic, performative, improvisatory.

On a different level though, the presence of that particular close up at that particular point could be thought of as problematic, a bit 'pushed', as it was not absolutely necessary to have a close up of the glasses. Close ups suggest attention, focus on something that is important either right now or something that will happen in the near future and the filmmaker draws our attention to it in advance, marking it stand out as something significant. The children have 'learned' that and they repeated it; they also exhibited it in a number of practical filming activities that preceded the actual film. However, when the time comes, they cannot always easily distinguish when its use is necessary and when it is not. They can see it occasionally merely as an opportunity - dictated by the course and nature of the filming - to demonstrate that knowledge; amid not accurately, not in the right context. Admittedly there were not many opportunities for close ups, as there were not many things that special attention had to be drawn to; therefore from that point of view it is probably justified. Since they don't know as yet whether they will have another opportunity to have a close up later (as said, not everything was strictly planned in this production) they do it here.

But its presence at this point can even baffle the spectator: is there poison in the drinks or something? Why so much insistence on the ritual? (as indicated by the long duration of the close up: 'if we are going to do it let's do it for ever!'). Though probably the children didn't think about the fact that their brainwave is not carried forward and it doesn't develop, the question still remains about the appropriate use of the cinematic language in this instance. This, then, is another example of the dynamic relationship between the concept, the metalanguage which encodes it, and the fluid practices which enact it in complex practice, the process

captured by Engestrom's (1999) expansive cycles. The concept is tested to the point of breaking, and though it may produce effects of incoherence for the viewer, it represents the dynamic process of development in these aspects of media and film literacy.

(12) 01.32 - 01.51: The longest shot of the video in terms of duration (Figure 6.16). Back to the two girls who now move from the bar to serve the customers who have been sitting on their table.



Figure 6.17: Barmaid (Anna) serving the new customers

Shot by Aris in long shot and on eye-level, this is the continuation of the shot that appeared before the close up of the pouring glasses and it was momentarily interrupted by it. The camera follows the two girls as they serve the customers and then all the way back to the bar, initially in a left and then in a right pan always in the same long shot. The scene ends with both girls exiting the bar (Figure 6.18): Myrto to dispose of some rubbish

from the bar, Anna because it is the end of her shift (That was not necessarily part of the plot. In reality, Anna had a dentist appointment that she remembered, and she had to go. This is much like soap operas where they have people dying or somehow vanishing when the actors have decided to leave the series for their own reasons!).

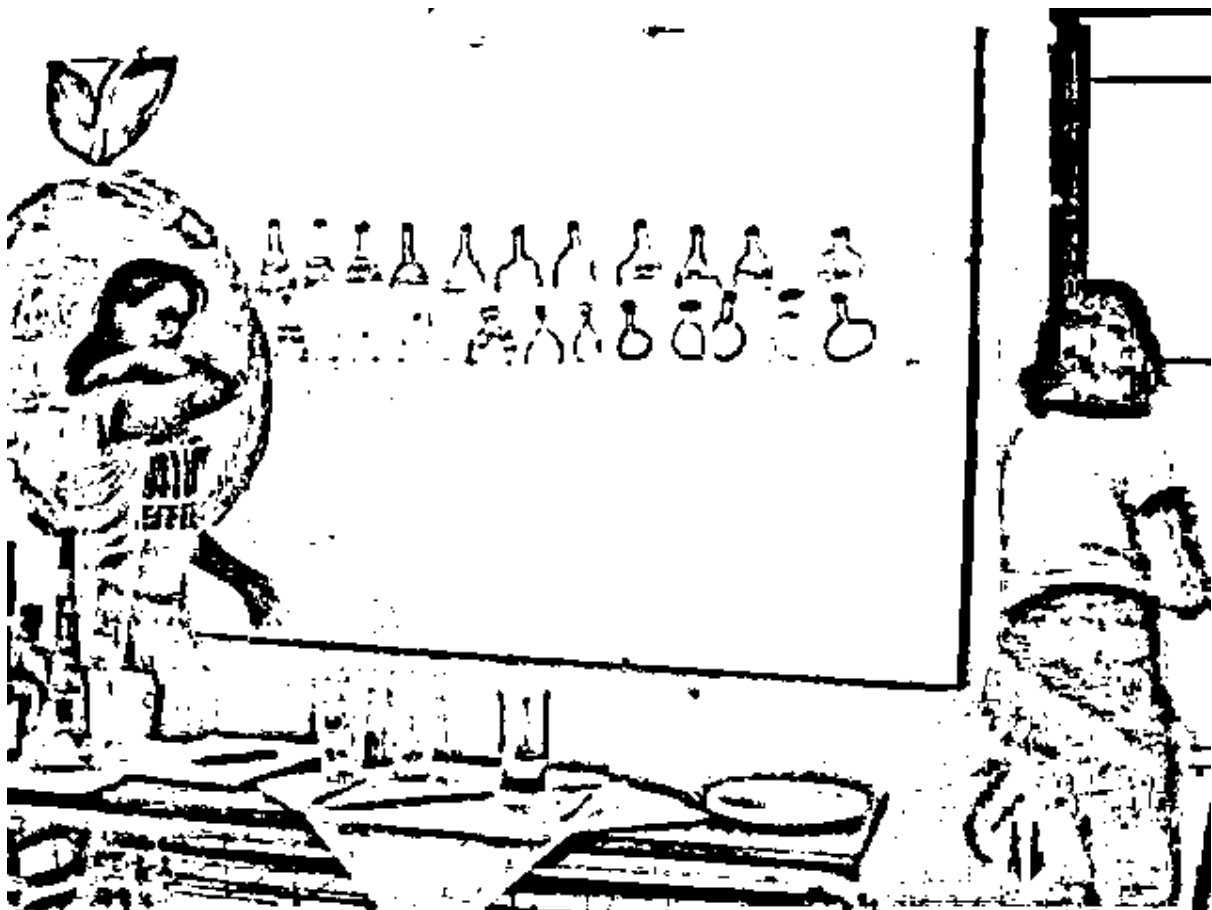


Figure 6.18: Barmaid (Anna) exiting for bar errant

This and the two previous shots could be seen as a hypotactic structure: the long shot that gets broken up by a cutaway to a close up of the girl with the drink - the insert. Though Hodge and Tripp refer to hypotaxis in the overall structure, I think it is interesting to observe what happens on the micro level. The instance here seems to be a form of subordination similar to what in language would be a subordinate clause: 'They were standing at the bar while she poured the drink and they continued talking'. This instance breaks away from the logic of 'this happens and

then this happens' as it introduces a hiatus in the narrative. On a theoretical level this observation also extends the idea of Bordwell and Thompson (2006) about continuity editing: the children are using hypotactic structures and those are exactly the structures which comprise continuity editing; in other words, an understanding of the continuity system as exhibited by the children here is a form of hypotaxis.

6.3.4 Fourth syntagm – the dramatic climax

(13) 01.52 - 01.55: Cut to a close up (Figure 6.19) of a stranger's face that appears behind the bar's curtains as he looks briefly through the door.



Figure 6.19: Transition special effect with caption reading 'Twenty minutes later' with potential thief's head appearing at the door of the bar.

This one is in fact an example of an 'appropriate' close up. The framing in conjunction with the boy's facial expression and look creates a particular impression, making us suspect that he is up to no good, maybe a thief. This scene (essentially the boy's face) is shown 'inside' the frame of a newspaper, an effect the children discovered after trying out and experimenting with the software's effect bank and created during editing. The 'newspaper' has a headline that reads '20 minutes later'. In that way again the return and appearance of the girl can be justified and the passing of the time is being signified. Apart from the need to find a way to justify the return and appearance, the children decided on this effect because they thought that it was quite appropriate as stories like this quite often appear in the newspapers and that it will give a more dramatic effect. The music changes completely and turns into an instrumental 'mystery' theme with a characteristically repetitive high pitch violin sound. Once again, the relationship between the simple concept (close-up) and the practical realization of it is dynamic, in this case in its appropriation of new resources at hand and their possibilities for expanding the semiotic frame. In this case, the fluid extension of the concept produces an effective and coherent result.

(14) 01.56 - 02.01:



Figure 6.20: Transition special effect with caption reading 'Twenty minutes later' with the thief's legs approaching

The camera cuts immediately into a close up (Figure 6.20) of the thief's feet, being shot from a high angle, as he walks on his toes towards the barmaid (Myrto) who has returned in the meantime and she cleans a table unaware of the thief's presence. Here there is the somehow puzzling question hanging on of when the barmaid returned back to the bar after having seen her leaving at the end of the previous scene. In a similar way as we saw earlier, no particular provision had been made for that or, for some reason, the return scene - if it ever existed - did not make it into the final cut. Asked about that, the children commented that the title '20 minutes later' on the newspaper-effect was enough to justify the return of the girl even though she was never seen coming back. Halfway through this shot and as the thief walks in (which is in close up and shot from a

high angle as the camera follows his feet) the newspaper effect disappears and the shot returns to normal.

(15) 02.02 - 02.06: The position of the camera changes and it has now moved into a point where we can see the thief, not from the back anymore but rather his face as he approaches on his toes the barmaid who now becomes also visible as the camera pans to the left (Figure 6.21).



Figure 6.21: Thief (Aris) threatening barmaid (Myrto)

The thief threatens her with a gun from behind and he also shouts to the other two customers to remain still. The action is shot in a long shot and the matching of action between this and the previous shot (a key characteristic in continuity editing, as stressed above) is almost ideal.

This is an indication that the concepts of shot type are becoming increasingly complex, extending into the grammar of shot sequence and narrative editing. The dialectic process involves not just individual moments where concept-becomes-immediate practice, but an evolving sequence of this process over time.

(16) 02.07 - 02.08: For one second we see in medium shot the two bewildered customers, taken by surprise too, stand up and raise their hands in fear (Figure 6.22).



Figure 6.22: The customers putting their hands up in fear

In conjunction with the previous and the following shot, this is a synchronic/diatopic syntagm constructed by editing and a successful instance of parallel action which of course was shot at a different time and assembled together at the editing stage – this was something that had

been planned in advance. In this whole section, it is worth noting the fast pace of the editing, with the short duration of each shot, compared to the previous scenes – appropriate for the fast action depicted now. Though some ‘mistakes’ appear here in the way the shots have been joined together, this only shows the eagerness on behalf of the children to accelerate the pace of the narrative: they were also making fast decisions ‘influenced’ somehow by the narrative moving fast.

This is further evidence of the fluid, dynamic nature of the application of concept in practice, and of the character of ‘just-in-time’ learning (Gee, 2007), which, while it may challenge the rigidity of instructional learning, in this case is layered on top of it.

(17) 02.09 - 02.13: Cut back to the medium shot (Figure 6.23) of the thief and the barmaid, this is the remaining of the shot (15) within which shot (16) was inserted (Figure 6.22). A momentary loss of concentration on the part of the thief is enough for the barmaid to disarm him by throwing his gun away.

As the camera pans to the right to follow the barmaid’s action we can see at the far edge of the frame (still in the same long shot) a policewoman who must have been following the thief. The flying gun lands near the policewoman.

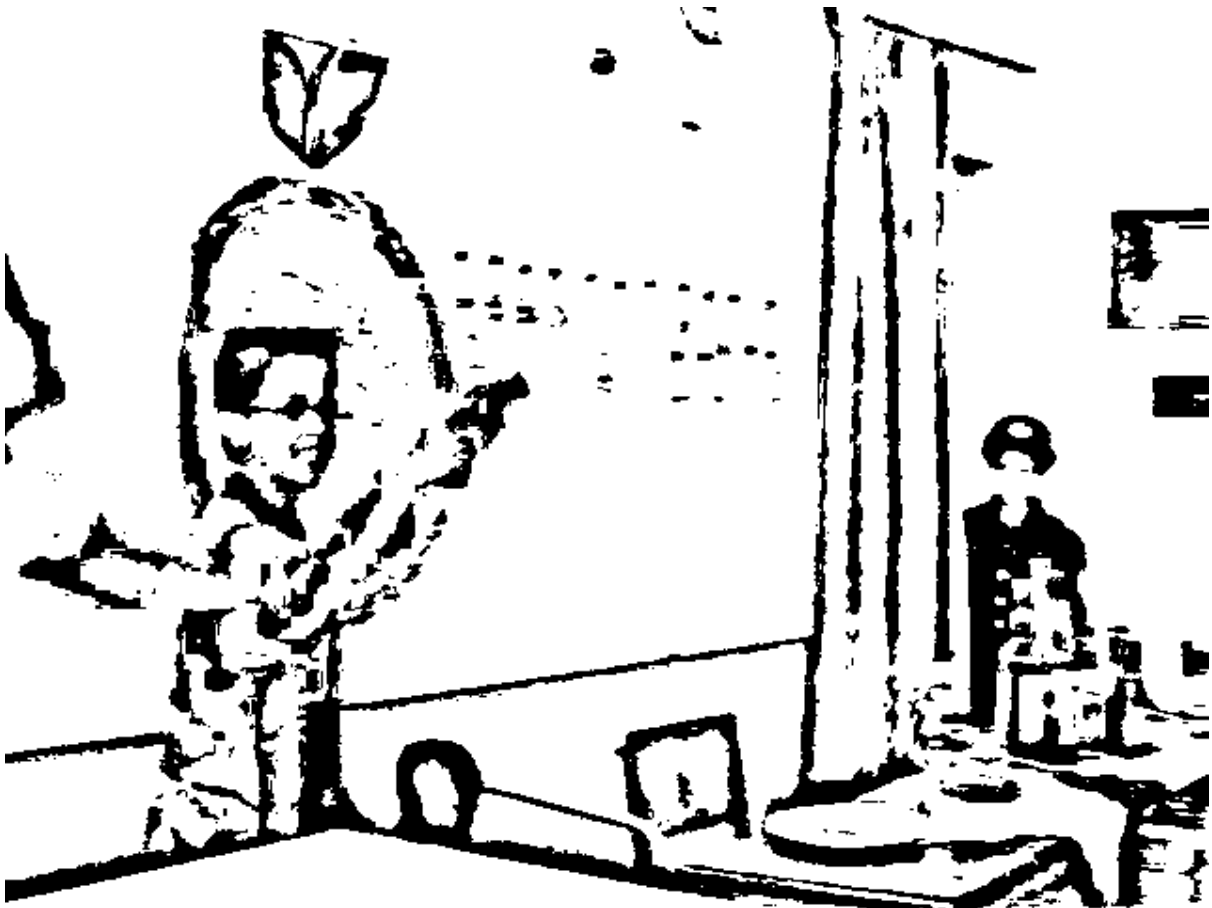


Figure 6.23: Barmaid (Myrto) disarming thief (Aris)

This is a very successful and 'economically' designed shot as it manages to include a large portion of action within a minimal camera movement, essentially within a single shot. The same music carries on as the tension is at its highest.

(18) 02.14 - 02.15: A new change of camera angle. The camera now frames the policewoman in a medium close up taken almost from the point of view of the thief (Figure 6.24). The policewoman, played by Hara, Myrto's younger sister, leans to pick up the gun and she turns it onto the thief, shouting at him to follow her to the police station.



Figure 6.24: Policewoman (Hara) targeting thief

The framing is quite appropriate and in combination with the movement and the posture of the policewoman's body (she almost jumps up to threaten the thief and impose her presence – although of small stature herself) allows us to sense the policewoman's determination. Here the contributory mode (Burn, 2013) of dramatic action co-creates the meaning within the cinematic frame.

A 'Blues Brothers', police-related music theme starts now, a kind of triumphant overtone.

(19) 02.16 - 02.22: A change in camera angle and a long shot allows the viewer to see the policewoman as she moves on to capture the thief who has surrendered after his gun was taken away (Figure 6.25). The policewoman takes the thief outside the bar with his hands behind his

back with the camera moving into a right pan following the action until they both exit the bar.

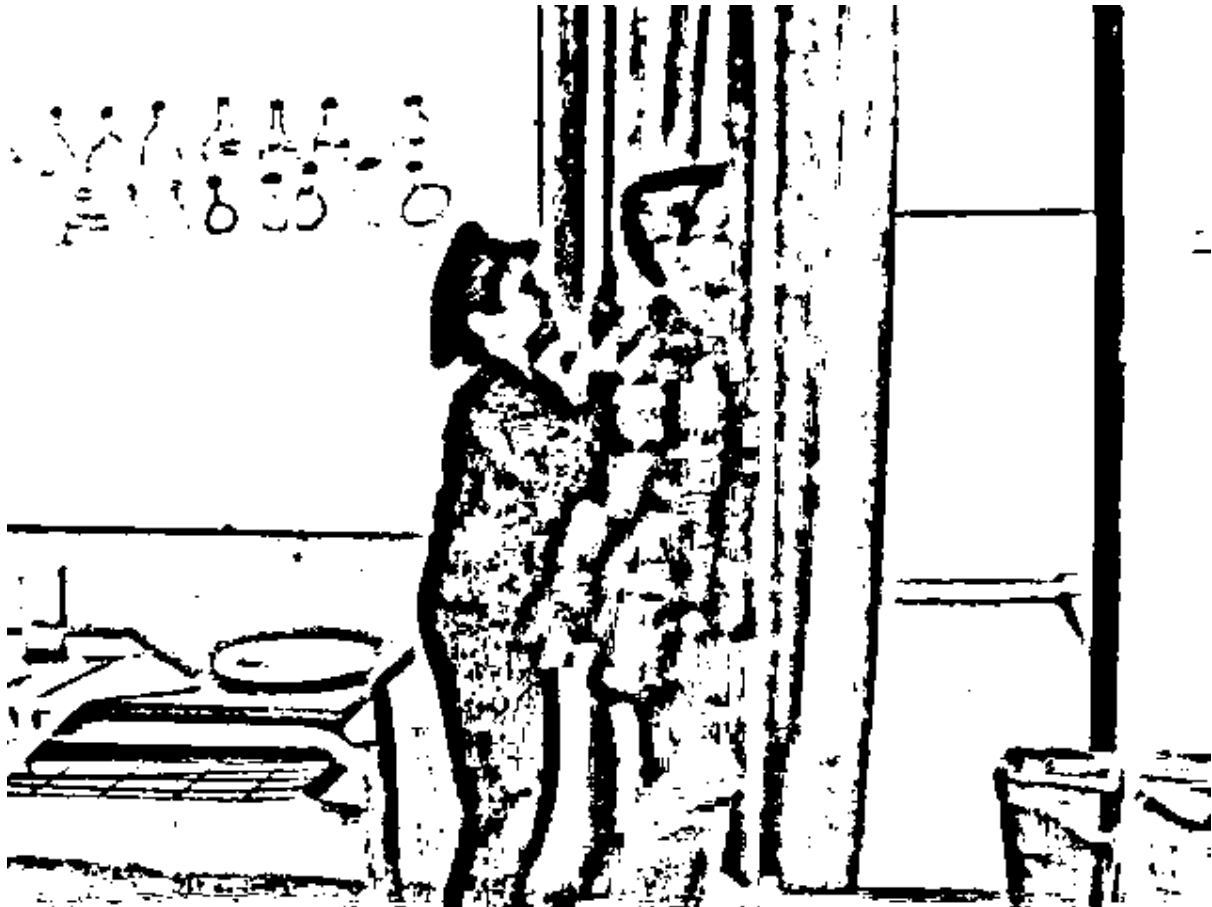


Figure 6.25: Policewoman (Hara) arresting thief (Aris)

(20) 02.23-02.26: Cut to a medium shot of the barmaid (Figure 6.26) who now sighs with relief and crosses herself for her good luck (a typical gesture of thanking God in the Greek Orthodox tradition) before collapsing with exhaustion on the bar table (Figure 6.27).



Figure 6.26: Barmaid (Myrto) sighing with relief and crossing herself



Figure 6.27: Barmaid (Myrto) collapsing on the bar table

This scene signals the end of the action, though not of the film itself yet. The music - that has been carrying the previous tune until now - changes into a Greek female pop song [for the credits to follow. As in the whole piece, the contribution made to the film by the children's cultural experience is in evidence.

6.3.5 Fifth syntagm – credits

(21) 02.27 - 02.50: The credits are scrolling down on a blue background with the video's title ('ΜΗΛΟ BAR') and the children's names, created in the editing suite (Figure 6.28).



Figure 6.28: Video credits scrolling down

(22) 02.51 - 06.30: The actual visual element and the action of the film is only 2 minutes and 50 seconds long but the total running time of the video is 7 minutes and 16 seconds. This remaining time, following the end of action and the credits, is devoted to the closing tune which the two girls who were mainly responsible for choosing the songs and the music (Myrto and Anna) were adamant to let it run for its entire duration (4' 07'') amid a black screen (Figure 6.29). The song, in Greek, translating as 'Missed Calls' in English, is sung by a well-known Greek female pop singer, Elena Papparizou, who has made her name singing songs celebrating precisely girl power. The happy feeling of the children that they have completed the film (as well as its happy ending), apparently 'leaks' into the film itself. We are observing here, therefore, yet another instance of the 'girl power' idea (Currie, Kelly and Pomerantz, 2009), in the sense that it was discussed earlier. Both the choice of the song with the girl-theme and the 'demand' to run it in its entirety, signify yet again not only the two girls' dominance and power as exercised through their acting in the video as well as the decisions taken throughout its making, but also their vast cultural knowledge of music and film. In this sense, what is happening here can also be thought of as a kind of curation (Potter, 2012b, 2013): the two girls are curating resources drawn from different domains to make their point and to create the effect they wish to create. At the same time, this instance can also be explained in terms of what Cameron (1997), as seen earlier, has observed for the voice as being a kind of embodied performance of gender. The difference here, in relation to other examples of the use of voice we have seen, is that rather than it being their own voices, the girls can be said to have delegated their voices to the singer of the song instead.

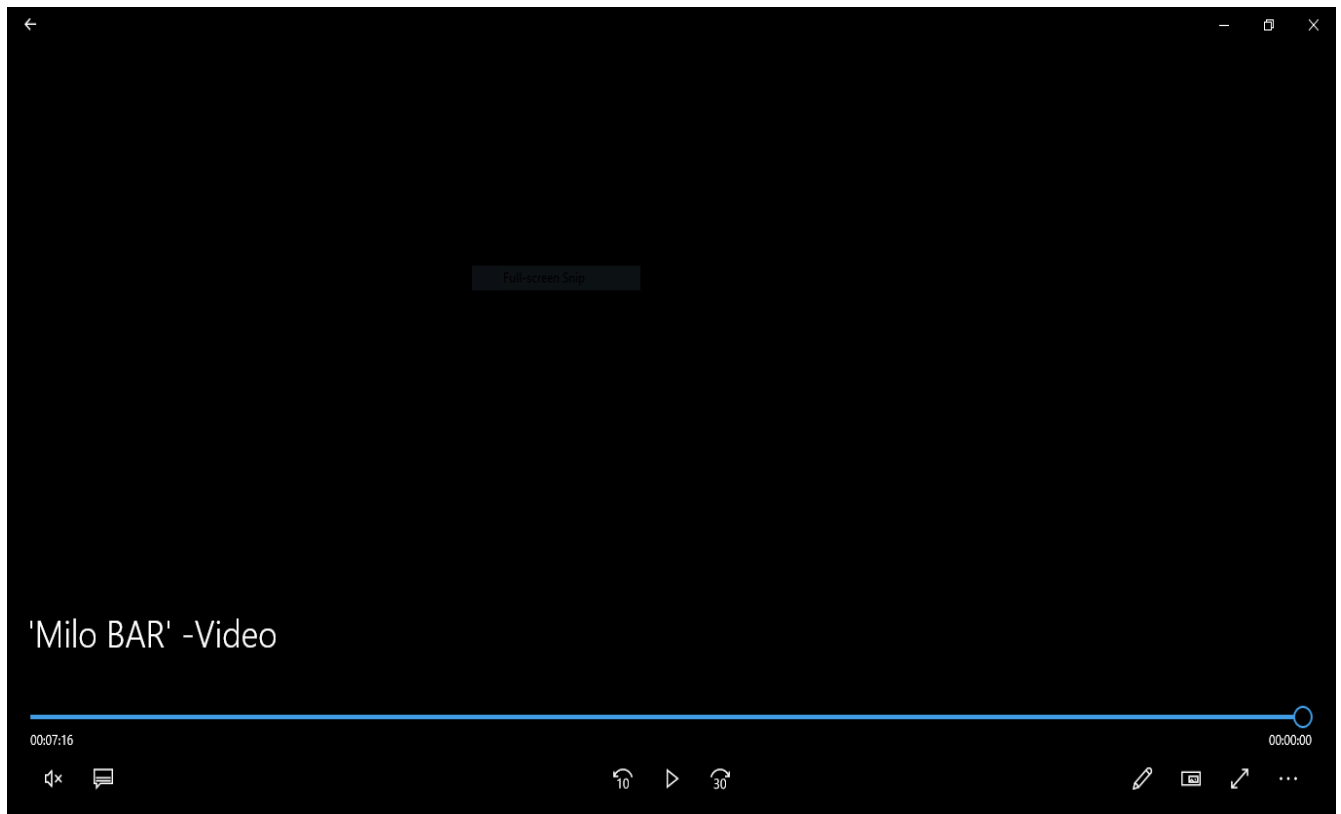


Figure 6.29: Blank screen with music playing on the background at the end of video

6.4 Discussion: Multimodal Design of the moving image

In this section, I will discuss emerging issues in relation to media literacy conceived as multimodal design, addressing setting, lighting, dramatic action and music (what Burn describes as the 'contributory modes') as well as filming and editing (what he describes as the 'orchestrating modes') (Burn, 2013).

6.4.1 *Setting*

The setting of the action was constructed specifically for the film. One of the school's classrooms was used as a studio and the children arranged the furniture (chairs, tables, as well as 'building' the main bar) and painted the background on the blackboard as we have already seen.

There is one level of action similar to theatre (in fact everything was staged as theatre. There is even the door where people are coming in and out from). All the scenes are filmed in a single plane, and they actually take place in a single level with nothing taking place behind or in front of the level that is the 'centre' of the action (and subsequently of the filming) at any given moment. Even when there is parallel action going on and a new plane of action is introduced (for example, the customers arriving and later raising their hands up when the thief enters), the filming does not show both levels of action at the same time. The use of props and objects (bottles, glasses, pistol etc.) is 'literal', as it would happen in real life. There are no objects operating as 'motifs' (Bordwell and Thompson, 2006: 150) with recurring meanings. They are only used once and when it is appropriate.

6.4.2 *Lighting*

Regarding lighting, there was not much work done, though quite a lot had been discussed about that element during the preliminary photographic activities. At the same time, there were no overexposed or brighter or darker areas in the film and light was evenly distributed. That was helped by the fact that there was natural light coming through the classroom's windows as the video was shot at about two o'clock in the afternoon in the month of June. During the classroom discussions we had said that the bright sun would create hard light. There was, though, some consideration of the light source and an avoidance of too much blinding light falling on the setting and some experimentation with the curtains and the position of certain objects so that they could remain properly lit and avoid heavy shadows (attached or cast ones). Did that involve any degree of intentionality? Maybe not for creating a particular atmosphere for the film, but generally showing an appreciation and understanding of the effect the light can have. That might seem initially trivial but probably

it is not, if we take into account that before the photographic exercises there were some children who were unaware of the negative effects, in photographic or technical terms of filming against the sun. It could be argued that the children could have tried to create a night scene with appropriate lighting, but technical difficulties and time restrictions did not allow that. The children, however, showed a good level of understanding and appreciation of the lighting manipulation in the photographic activities as has been described in the relevant section. It was also the case that they decided that they could do without specific lighting. There was a big photographic light available that was used for our photography exercises, but it was not used for the video. The children felt that the story didn't require specific lighting after all. The natural light and the fact that the video was shot in the afternoon, in combination with the 'dark' story (both metaphorically as in the bar / night set and because it is a kind of 'black' comedy) forms a strange contrast between the real and the imagined world which it does not quite fit into, but which did not seem to concern the children.

Closer attention must be given to lighting manipulation to reveal whether it falls outside the abilities of the children of that age as it was certainly not among the first things to be considered during the preparation stage.

6.4.3 *Dramatic action*

Since they were not 'introduced' properly in the film, the characters and their roles became recognizable through their dress. It has to be said that the children went into great lengths choosing and trying on clothes for the film. Clearly these are not clothes that would be worn on a normal school day. Certainly for the girls, the clothes worn in the film were more appropriate for going out and they could even be thought of as more appropriate for adults. This can be justified by the fact that they were playing adult roles. In fact, clothes are key elements in constructing the

poles of the binary oppositions the children operate in: Children/adults and school/ 'outside life'. The girls wore make-up more so for the sake of it ('we are in a film') and wanting to look like adults rather than for creating a particular character or avoiding light reflection in the filming. This is still a kind of drama, though primarily staged for self-representation rather than 'acting'.

Some parts of the film were improvised rather than being a strictly scripted drama. The resources for the plot came from various sources. As said, the project took place on a large Greek island, a well-known tourist destination. Bars abound by the seaside and children had a good knowledge of that: minors are permitted in such establishments in Greece and therefore the children have no doubt experienced being in a bar. It is interesting to note that the two barmaids have adopted as their stage names the names of 'Natasha' and 'Sonya'. Although these are not uncommon as female names in Greece, they both sound rather Eastern European. Bars in this town are heavily staffed by young Eastern European females and the children seem to have again a good cultural understanding of the phenomenon which they depict eloquently in their own production. Another source of inspiration for the story came from the personal relationship between Anna and Vaggelis. These two had a liking for each other outside 'stage', a kind of romance, as I was secretly told by some of their classmates. The way she talks to him (and even holds him when escorting him out of the bar) shows familiarity. In their discussions they used verbal cues known only to these two and while acting they somehow continued discussions that had between them earlier in playtime, in 'real' life. Anna also explores various possibilities about Vaggelis by asking things about him which a barmaid (but also somebody who is interested in someone) would ask, 'covering' one role inside the other. The 'taking home' episode in the film is probably less than accidental: it is common practice for them as Vaggelis quite often visits

Anna's house, as I was told; these are all elements that go beyond the 'filmic'. In that way she both uses 'material' from life to feed into the advancement of the story while at the same time she explores various issues of her concerns during the discussion. It is interesting to observe here then how children's real-life blends and intersects with the stage drama material and the opportunities this creates for role experimentation and identity formation. Indeed, the identity work going on throughout the video project will be explored in more detail below as in the next chapter as well. Finally, influences from the media can be detected. In the discussions and interviews held with the children throughout the project, it was stated that they watch many TV series and this was evident not only in the themes explored but also in the media knowledge they exhibited of codes and conventions of genres, particularly of black comedy and police drama.

There are questions concerning the modality status of the children's performance. Is their performance naturalistic and in what sense? [note though Bordwell and Thompson's (2006) observation that realism is not necessarily a fruitful approach for analyzing acting]. Is there exaggeration? Overall, I believe that the acting is quite realistic even when they play 'unrealistic' (for them) roles like being barmaids or thieves. The situation could easily exist in real life although most likely not for them. It certainly fits though into the genre's conventions: the actors look quite convincing and behave in a manner appropriate to their character's function in the context of the film, making it hence a 'good' performance. In this sense, it could be argued that the play is of high 'presentational modality' (van Leeuwen, 1999), being true to the genre.

The music score that accompanies this effect (which Myrto and Anna chose and inserted during the editing stage) changes completely and quite abruptly from the previous one. We get the beginning of a track where somebody is heard to shout loudly 'Get on the floor! Put your

hands up!’ and then the music (another dance piece) kicks off. The music here operates on three levels. Firstly, it is just the next song in the non-stop background music coming from the bar as it conventionally would have happened (except that in a film somebody has to do that!). Secondly it marks the different scene in the film that just begins. Thirdly - and quite strikingly - through the lyrics it operates as a precursor signifying the change in mood that is about to occur in a little while with the thief entering and threatening the customers. In the interview that followed I was not able to verify whether that was a fully conscious choice. Though some of the children’s English is at a quite good level it is unlikely that they would have noticed the lyrics or that they would necessarily make an immediate connection with the scene that was to follow. It is more likely that they based their choice on intuition and a general feeling (though certainly culturally determined) that this piece is appropriate for this point in the film. Again, that indicates that Myrto and Anna have a good degree of awareness of the codes that operate in linking pieces of music with particular points in a film.

6.4.4 *Filming*

Regarding the cinematographic elements, I would observe the following. Low-cost video cameras use standard lenses which are not changeable. The one used in the project was a 50 mm one (‘middle focus length / ‘normal’) so there was no noticeable perspective distortion. It is also a subject we didn’t touch during the lessons so it was unlikely that the children would know about the options available.

In relation to the framing and duration of shots as well as the editing the following observations can be made. The children used to a large extent the principles of continuity editing as described above by Bordwell and Thompson. This relates to the fact that “continuity editing has proved itself well-suited for portraying the interactions of two or more

characters” (Bordwell and Thompson, 2006: 273) and, as has been remarked already, the children viewed the whole project to some extent as a theatre play.

In relation to that, it is worth observing also that there was no crossing of the 180-degree line, although the children were not explicitly taught about that. It seems that they intuitively understood this from their media experience as viewers and they avoided it. This understanding comes also probably from their experience in play acting which they ‘imported’ in the film as this is precisely a point where the cinematographic 180 degrees line coincides with the theatrical (still invisible) proscenium arch.

Most shots were taken from an eye-level position suggesting that the action was viewed by an idealised, ‘average’ spectator who saw what the eye can see. Relevant is also the fact that most shots are filmed by setting the camera perpendicular to the subject almost as the eye of the ‘neutral, theatrical spectator’. Is there a particular significance here or is it coincidence and rather convenience and maybe lack of space? Note that the thief was filmed in an oblique angle. In this we can say that this bit is ‘out of reality’, strange, or unusual to be filmed like that.

There is also a question of when and why they make cuts as opposed to continuous takes or pan. It is not insignificant that sometimes there is not a clear reason or ‘they couldn’t be asked’. After all, not everybody in the group took the project equally seriously.

6.4.5 Editing

As a starting observation on editing, I would comment that although quite often the children approached editing as a function that entails simply the linking and assembling of shots together, they managed to show some

creativity especially with the inserted scenes and the creation of appropriate rhythm for the thief scene.

The children were intrigued by the very construction of the moving images, and more so by the way shots are put together to form a narrative. They revealed varied conceptions of how they thought the succession of shots is achieved, firstly during filming (editing-in-camera), and then in editing (editing-in-computer). They are aware that changes of locations, people and situations occur in films and they wonder how this is achieved:

ANNA: When we switch the camera on does it start immediately?

KV: No, it takes a while

ANNA: I'm asking because we've shown things which were not in the story and if it got switched on immediately I could've said 'Aris', then switch off so we don't show things in between and then go on to Stella.

The notions of what happens 'in between shots' and of 'the camera moving between people' mentioned later returned throughout the project in various forms. They are probably mainly technical questions but we should not forget that editing also concerns aesthetic and ideological issues as well and at various occasions the children raised these aspects too.

Many suggestions were offered en route in relation to these functions:

STELLA: I don't know how they do it but in films, for the camera to get from one person to another, it gets dark and immediately goes to the other without showing any wall

ARIS: There is a black in the middle as you do it

MYRTO: You have to turn the camera off quickly and move to the next shot. You stop and there is something black on the screen and then you carry on

In a way, these suggestions go to the very heart of the filmmaking and editing itself: "Editing might appear to present a dilemma to the filmmaker. On one hand, the physical break between one shot and another may seem

to have a disturbing effect, interrupting the viewer's flow of attention" (Bordwell and Thompson, 1993: 261). Like the filmmaker, the children also felt this interruption of flow. Stella's words above, in particular, are worth closer attention.

To begin with, when she is talking about the 'wall', she is referring to the 'in between' space that appears when the camera has to move from one person to the other. Though panning between two people in a dialogue is something that does not happen very often in films - except for particular dramatic purposes - it was used a lot by the children in their initial attempts of filming as a way of going from one person to another. In reality though, they did not want a pan necessarily at this point of their film, for a number of reasons: they did not want a load of wall between shots; it would take a long time for the camera to get from one point to the other; it would be very quick and jerky. But we are still at the 'before' stage in the filming part of the project, so panning seems to be the only way they know in order to 'cut' between shots, and this became evident in the 'before' video they filmed, as analysed earlier above.

It seems therefore that the struggle here is twofold: both in understanding the concept of cut between shots and also finding a suitable term for that process. This struggle is reflected in the grammatical structure too. Stella's quote above is lexically sparse, with a high proportion of grammatical over lexical items indicating that the concept has not been secured yet. As for Stella the process appears to be still dynamic, even among lexical items this is clearly a verb structure rather than one reliant on abstract nouns; it is about actions rather than consolidation of concepts. Nevertheless, although Stella has not fully mastered the idea of 'shot change', she seems to be aware that in films they do not actually show any wall, in her words. In this way she appears to gradually move towards the idea of a shot change through cuts.

On the other hand, Aris talks about 'a black in the middle' in between two shots. Here, there is a different conception of the 'in between'. Most likely,

Aris is thinking of the process of fade to black in a scene which is a particular kind of transition whose meaning has to do with temporality and time passing. Not only is he getting it in the wrong place, but he assumes that this always happens between shots, which of course is not the case. Clearly, there is a confusion here between the conventions of shot change and fade to black. In a sense, this ambivalence corresponds to what Vygotsky (1986) calls 'pseudoconcepts' the in-between stages a learner goes through during the concept formation process.

In the third quote above, Myrto, trying to understand what happens with the time between one shot and the next, has her own explanation which is slightly more advanced than the other children's. Although, like the others, she mentions the existence of 'something black' appearing on the screen, she uses the word 'shot', a more technical term, and she has also a basic conception of cut as a shot change when she points out that to go from shot to shot 'you have to turn the camera off'. Hence, in these examples we can observe the individual differences that exist between children in their conceptual understanding, and consequently in the use of metalanguage. In any case though, and as Hodge and Tripp (1986) have also observed with children of the same age trying to explain how films are put together, they are all grabbling to find a language; and even when they begin to understand the concepts they still employ a largely everyday terminology at this stage. As I have noted elsewhere, the children are unpacking the meanings in order to get a grip on them, before they can reach the condensed, abstract concept that is just a single noun.

In another passage soon after, Myrto offers another explanation of the 'black in between':

MYRTO: It's like the adverts, when it says 'Creta farm' then black, then 'Beauty shop helps you blah blah', black ...

KV: Why is black there?

MYRTO: To separate the adverts from each other

KV: So why do you want black in your film?

MYRTO: But they do it in films too. Like in 'Friends', have you seen it? It shows that woman talking and then it changes the page with black and then it goes to the other house ...

Here Myrto refers to black used as a separation marker between adverts but also as an effect, a 'page' that turns to move the action from location to location and from time to time.

At one point during the discussion about shot succession, Myrto went to the blackboard to make a graphic representation of what she was trying to explain verbally: she drew a picture of the faces of two people facing each other while talking on the phone with each other. Between the faces she initially drew an upside letter Z separating the two people, which shortly after she replaced with a straight line. She explained that this effect of a split frame, showing that two people are on the telephone at the same time although they are in different locations [an example of a synchronic / diatopic syntagm Hodge and Tripp (1986) talk about], is achieved by placing a kind of a very fine cover, like a string of film, vertically on the camera's lens. Apart from the fact that her choice to make a drawing as a pictorial explanation, complementary to her verbal explanation, is an instance of a concept expressed in different modes, it is also equally interesting to observe that her explanation of the effect of the split frame reminds us of cinema pioneer Georges Melies' mechanical optical illusions rather than any of the contemporary electronic methods achieved in the editing suite or computer. Once again that points to the analogies stressed on a number of occasions between the children's and the early filmmakers' choices and understandings in relation to the filmic language.

In a lot of the discussions in relation to the transition from one shot to another, it was mentioned by the children that often two cameras operate at the same time to film something (a process followed mostly on television filming), although they did not seem to know how the cameras cooperate

and synchronize exactly. To move their thinking forward and to illustrate that this is not necessarily the case, I showed them an early 20th century black and white short film (one and a half minutes long) called 'Fire', taken from a MOMI teaching pack which had been filmed with a single camera and comprised four shots in its whole duration linked by cuts. The film, with its simple and clear cuts that allowed for the process to become evident, acted as a scaffolding tool. Through the discussion that followed in relation to this, and also through discovery by trial and error, the children began gradually to realize the affordances of the camera. This became obvious particularly with Stella's remark in relation to the camera stopping and starting:

STELLA: They shot one scene, they turn the camera off so that the actors can get ready, they move to the right place and they turn the camera on again

ARIS: But the actors will have to remember where they've stopped so that they can't be caught by the eye ...

KV: Did you do that in your film?

ARIS: No, we didn't

A number of observations can be made regarding the points in this extract: Initially, we come to realize in a summarised form that there are two issues which the children have been trying to understand in relation to editing and shot change. First, is the seeming gap in the story caused by the shot change, which Bordwell and Thompson (1993) referred to as pointed out above (I would call this 'narrative gap'); second, the gap that is caused by the actors moving to the next place between shots (I would call this 'physical gap'). As I have discussed elsewhere, shot changes are either about spatial or temporal change, what Hodge and Tripp (1986) call the diachronic and the synchronic. Temporal change is what Metz (1974) refers to as 'temporal ellipsis', in other words what happens between the end of one shot and the beginning of the next, and this is what Anna was referring to when she said earlier that 'if it gets switched on we don't show things in between'. Therefore, these 10 years olds are at the space where they try to

understand what the spatial and temporal implications for shot change are, how time and space work in editing and how filmmakers do all that. Clearly, they are at the zone of proximal development Vygotsky (1978) talks about, and the short film which I showed them was an attempt on my part as teacher to scaffold their understanding of editing with the film operating as a tool in that process. Although they have not as yet fully understood the mechanics of the process, they are working their way towards doing so. The results of this progression can be seen on the language level too. In Stella's formulation we can detect a shift from previously considering the camera simply as a recording device to thinking of it as part of the editing process. Moreover, following the discussions, the screening of the short film and the reflections, she arrived at formulations that contain no reference to 'black in between' anymore. Her grammatical structure in the extract just above, also consisted of a series of five verbs, five transitive sequences where she presents the process as a kind of narrative in a logical sequence of almost scientific precision, which reveals that although she does not have the term yet, clearly she has the concept of shot change. Though there is no nominalisation yet in these structures, this process is under way. We might want to talk, therefore, about different kinds of in-between stages in language to represent how the concept is understood when you run it through, play it through, explore it in detail, figure it as an action in the world, as social process, before it becomes fully solidified.

In the same extract, Aris's acknowledgement that in their film they did not do it like the films they watch, points to a number of issues: Firstly, it shows the discrepancy between understanding the conventions as 'readers' of the media and applying them as 'writers'. Secondly, it is a reference to their tendency to keep everything in the production in one take because this is like life; life is real time and there are no breaks. To be sure, the idea of a break seems a large step to them, even a surprising one. To some extent, this demonstrates the effectiveness of the continuity system, which

is intended to produce a sense of continuous existence through fragmentation that eventually makes things appear seamless. It is this illusion of seamless reality that they are having real difficulty in undoing, so although they learn the codes and conventions at a subconscious level, when they come to think about them consciously it seems odd to them because it breaks up the experience.

Finally, when Aris realizes that their effort is not similar to the 'real' films, he implies that having seen what is 'wrong' with their film, next time they will make it better, without continuity mistakes, which is what he means when he talks about 'actors not being caught by the eye'. Through the scaffolding that got them thinking about crossing over from reading to writing, and through recursive attempts on filming by a process of discovery and trial and error and reflection, they will eventually start to apply what they know as readers of films to become writers of films.

6.5 Conclusion: moving image making as Dialectical, Dramatic and Developmental

What are the children trying to 'say' here? On a first level, it could be concluded that it is a story with a moral: good always prevails and evildoers get punished in the end. Most likely though, the storyline itself is an excuse and it is of less importance, as there is no clear meaning or intention to be 'deep'. The main motivation is an effort to 'transcend', to elevate themselves into something else and an opportunity to enact other peoples' lives, mainly adult roles: thieves, gangster movies, 'cool', 'big' women working in a bar. The 'stage' gave them that opportunity. It seems that after all, the fact that they chose drama rather than documentary, when given the opportunity to choose, was far from being a coincidence. The drama elements brought into the film - apart from enjoying the acting itself, as said in the interviews - allowed these young

people at the verge of adolescence to investigate adult roles and 'put into practice' ideas they have seen on television, at home and in real life.

Following from the analysis of the film that has preceded above then, it appears that the film is primarily about girls' power (Currie, Kelly, Pomerantz (2009) and dominance. The girls appear most of the time, they ran the bar, one carries the drunken man out, the other confronts successfully the male thief, and even the forces of law are in the face of a female policewoman (the sister of one of the two girls whose father is a high rank policeman in real life; hence the realistic gear and the whole preoccupation with police). These two girls in particular were very dynamic and close to each other, very dominant throughout the project and they almost invented the story by themselves.

As I have argued throughout this chapter, these forms of the dramatic elements and these presentations of girl power and dominance can be explained through Butler's (1999) idea of gender performativity as well as Willis' (2011) notion of girls as the embodied agents of girlhood. Additionally, they could be examined through the lens of multimodality as a way of identifying the specific ways in which these 'schedules of scripts' (van Leeuwen, 2021) of gender are enacted through different modes.

Moreover, on an ideological level, the triptych that epitomises the traditional values and has nurtured generations of Greeks for decades makes a comeback here (although with certain break-ups, as it will be shown in the next section): country-nation (as represented by the policewoman), religion (the girl crosses herself at the end of the film; the picture of Jesus Christ at the back of the classroom as in every school in the country), family (here in the form of the tight relation among the girls in particular, both as it appears in the film and in real life).

The findings in this study point to a new way of framing media education as something that is dynamic, dramatic and developmental. Reflecting on my work and the findings, therefore, I put forward an emerging

conception which can be termed the '3Ds model': Dialectical; Dramatic; Developmental.

DIALECTICAL

The chapter has looked at how conceptual learning moves from concept-learning and pedagogic instruction into practice, both as storyboard and then as film. It discovered that the process is a dialectical cycle between concept and practice: when the concepts (for example, of shot distance) are applied and realised in different modes, they become complex, sometimes contradictory, hard to manage, fluid. The learning process is then the movement through these complex, messy, contradictory processes, making emergency decisions, the 'just-in-time' learning that Gee (2007) describes.

Halliday's theory helps us to understand this aspect further. His approach is dynamic in the following sense: traditional pedagogy assumes that a concept is being taught and students learn the concept and then they apply it. To teach the concept, nevertheless, it has to be nominalised, the process has to be turned into a noun and it acquires a term, such as 'shot distance' or 'long shot'. When learners try to apply it though, they don't seem to be entirely comfortable with that. As such, sometimes they nominalise and sometimes they don't. The lexical sparsity is therefore dynamic because it is about actions and about processes: the students are pulling the camera away or getting physically close to the person or object to be filmed, rather than saying 'I am making a long shot'. This was seen in the activity of storyboarding where we have found that sometimes the young makers are not ready to nominalise and they are not ready to freeze the concept as a term. It appears that in such processes the idea about metalanguage in conceptual learning becomes complicated because it is related to processes and actions which they are still in the middle of doing and concretizing. Evident is a tension there between the neat idea of the concept as a fixed entity which the teacher

wants to teach them and the concept as a dynamic action which is messy, unpredictable and socially embedded and which is what the learners want to do. Engestrom's (1999) theory is also useful here because it captures that process in the idea of the expansive cycles learning. His point is that in child psychology the move is conventionally from concrete to abstract: the child initially thinks of concrete things and then they learn that there is an abstract term that describes these things. Engestrom's point is that it is not the concrete that is simple and the abstract that is complex. Instead, his point is that it is relatively easy for a child to learn the concept of, for example, long shot when taught: to learn what it means and what it includes. Coming on to the making it in practice and concretising it though, it suddenly becomes more complicated. A question emerges here then: is, for example, long shot about what is included in the shot or is it about distance from the shot? As shown in the data, these are the things the students came up against when storyboarding – and earlier with the photographs, when a taxonomy of different conceptions of frame types was proposed as a result of children's different responses on the matter. Contradictions of this kind became apparent when the children named a shot as a long shot whereas in reality, they were drawing a close up. In this sense, therefore, Engestrom is useful because he reverses that very process. And, again, as Halliday already captures, the act of concretely realising the concept breaks it down, pulls it apart, challenges it and contradicts it. Traditional pedagogy would view this process as inability on the part of the child to understand or as mistakes. In reality though, what is happening is learning in the developmental process and a dialectical exchange between concept and practice, repeatedly reiterated.

DRAMATIC

In the discussion of the above section there was an implicit focus on the orchestrating modes, i.e. filming and editing. These represent the

concepts of film language that are explicitly taught in film and media education. However, our analysis showed that a range of other contributory modes (Burn, 2013) were also an important part of the media making process and the final production, essentially the modes related to dramatic performance – dramatic being considered in its broadest sense.

Drama is an essential constituent of most live action narrative film, and the children understand this intuitively, even with their minimal media making experience as it seems an inescapable feature of production. A good deal of their creative effort goes into the modes involved: costume, gesture, action, posture, speech, accent, music. Examples of the last mode can be cited in the specific songs they chose and the narrative function of music pieces that complemented the action taking place at that particular moment to signify change of mood, direction and location.

So even though filmmaking is a multimodal enterprise, only the orchestrating modes are explicitly taught and conceptualised within the film and media education process. What are the implications of this for pedagogy? We will return to this in the Conclusion chapter.

However, this kind of role play is also characteristic of childhood and play, as we will discuss in relation to identity in the following section.

Finally, other roles are being played in the process: camera person, editor, costume and set designer: the adult roles found in media production but crucially also in children's production as Halverson (2010) has demonstrated in her research. We can consider these roles again in relation to learning, development and identity aspect in the next section.

DEVELOPMENTAL

In the previous sections, as indeed throughout the thesis, we have seen that media literacy and filmmaking involve playing social roles, kinds of performativity, and aspects of conceptual development. At this point, we need to ask about the social motivation of the 'sign-maker', as Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) describe it. Why do they make this film? What are they trying to represent? How does it involve aspects of their identity, as I have theorised in the Theory chapter?

Joseph Tobin says that "the meanings children give to media depend on the local contexts in which they live" (2000: i). This study has tried to explore precisely the connections between the children's social worlds and their media productions. But more to the point, the focus is to explore what these meanings are, what their representations are exactly and what they tell us about the world these children inhabit, what they say about how they perceive their world and what they think of it – particularly the adult world (as this is that is primarily represented in their video production) but also the children's world (mainly in the photographs). In that way, we get a whole repertoire of their ideas, perceptions and opinions and a glimpse of their social worlds. According to this, boys seem more eager to depict their present traits, where girls are preoccupied with future, feeling possibly the societal need of them to adopt gendered roles quickly and perform them. They make an early, emerging statement about what kind of world they would wish to live in. This is clearly depicted in the fact that their acting was not being directed necessarily to an audience (albeit an imaginary one), as a play ought to be. It was more like playing and indeed playing for each other, as acting out real situations, as performing real life with real face-to-face encounters. In relation to this, as Willet shows (2011), children's play is aspirational, involving playing roles in which they imagine themselves as adults or older teenagers. Here, the semiotic markers of an imagined

adult world (whiskey, crime, drunkenness) are dramatically deployed to achieve this end.

As such, in Goffman's terms, the children are not presenting their own everyday selves in the film – rather they are, as children and adolescents do, experimenting with imagined social roles through the mode of dramatic action and speech. This aspect of media literacy is the socio-cultural aspect which Burn & Durran (2007) indicate on their 3Cs model, where identity is subsumed in the act of media-making.

However, the children are playing other roles here, related to development. They are playing the roles of camera person, editor and actor, as Halverson (2010) has also observed in the video making project she describes. These roles imitate, even to some extent reproduce, adult roles in the film industry – although for them, being new roles and not doing it routinely as a profession, it involves still experimenting, negotiation and identity performance - and serve as images of possible futures for children in media education.

Finally, we can say that the film's social intentions, mainly driven by the girls who play such a powerful part in its construction, exhibits a dominant theme. Indeed, the film is about girls' power and dominance. Although the triptych of Greek values, as described above, is present, this is not uncritical or with no additions, and as such small 'break-ups' to this idealised portrait can be detected: the girl-power, an emerging theme in Greek society as is worldwide, is picked up by the girls and driven to the extremes – at least for their standards. These attempts in emerging femininity have to be considered in the face of a society (especially at the micro-level of the town they inhabit) that is still male dominated, in a region of the country where patriarchal values are still prevailing. The girls are nevertheless envisaging and painting a desirable future here, a

world they would like to live in. This is not necessarily a world where they will have to face criminals as in their film (although even this remains an issue and quite lately Greek society has been faced with a series of high profile female killing cases resulting in heated debates about the very use and precise meaning of the term 'femicide' which was recently brought into Greek common parlance) but a world of equality, free expression and - why not? - partying, as evidenced in the constant use of music in the film and the call to each other to dance while they are waiting for the customers!

Chapter 7 - Answering the research questions / Conclusions

This final chapter brings together the research questions posed at the beginning of the thesis and attempts to answer them in light of the findings of the study. As such, a number of conclusions are outlined, drawn from the analysis that preceded and in response to the specific research questions posed. The contribution to knowledge and the limitations of the study are then being considered. Finally, implications for the Greek educational system and policy are pointed out and recommendations for further research are drawn.

7.1 Research Question 1

The first question had asked: What forms does media literacy take for young learners in relation to their involvement with the moving image language? What do they know about media literacy when they discuss it and what can they do with it, before the structured pedagogic intervention?

To begin with, and apart from anything else, answers to such questions are also particularly important to any policy making. Prior to any curriculum implementation, it is essential to know what young people already know and can do in relation to the subject so that any program can subsequently build on that knowledge and advance it.

This research has found that the default modes of framing and composition clearly prevail. As it became evident, the majority of the photos (certainly in the 'before' but also a fair number of them in the 'after' set) were taken at eye-level height, mostly in long shot, and in horizontal orientation. Equally, the 'before' video (despite the fact that it

followed the still photography lessons the students had just experienced) showed signs of incoherence, something that the young makers realised themselves as they felt that their production did not fully accomplish the storyline they had been given and expected to visualise. More specifically, the short film they created was characterised mainly by continuous panning of the camera, lack of editing and an almost stage-like positioning of the actors toward the video camera that was recording them: the actors were clearly facing and speaking to the camera rather than to each other, adopting a rather theatrical mode. Understandably, these findings do not apply to all young makers. To be sure, there has been ample documentation of creative and sophisticated productions at this age level elsewhere (Burn, 2003; Mills, 2011; Potter, 2012a) – although it hasn't always been clear in these studies what level of prior media knowledge the children in question possessed: some of them may have already had a high level of media experience either through formal or even informal media training they may have received or because they have been avid viewers and makers of media. What the productions in this study reveal, nevertheless, is that the picture is still uneven and not universal: for various reasons, which can be different for each group, occasion and setting (some of which have been specified for the group in this study), young people can also produce media that do not necessarily fall into this optimistic pattern. Following such findings, the need for media education provision in schools becomes apparent. Media education needs to cater to these audiences as well and equip those children with the necessary critical and practical skills that will allow them to produce the media and the stories they desire, as they desire it.

Apart from being manifested in the 'before' productions created, existing knowledge of the moving image concepts was also revealed in the talking and discussions that went on during the sessions held. In relation to this, the children were found to have initially heard of some of the concepts in the form of words and related terms and expressions and recognised

some of them, as they revealed in the ensuing interviews conducted. The knowledge of these words comes mostly from the media itself as the children pick them up in news (Myrto, for example, has been quoted saying: "I heard this journalist saying 'let's get a close up on this issue now'"), and from the 'making of' programmes of films and series they watch.

Despite this fact, the exact meaning and the 'breadth and length' of the related concept is not always clear to them and often these understandings are of everyday nature, largely exhibiting what Vygotsky (1986) terms 'spontaneous concepts', having been acquired outside formal instruction. Understandably though, as has been also found, there can be many 'dimensions' to a media language concept as this is not always an all-purpose and impermeable entity.

7.2 Research Question 2

The second research question asked: How does a dynamic, cyclical model of analysis, production and reflection as a pedagogic approach work for the learning of moving image language and of the making with it?

The suggested model, based on the above principles, has worked productively in the setting that was applied, in several ways.

Firstly, it helped in making the grammar of the moving image explicit; initially the techniques of the orchestrating modes of filming and editing but crucially also those of the contributory modes (Burn, 2013) – although that was proven to be more problematic, as will be discussed further down. In the analysis of the data, it became clear that a pedagogy focused merely on the orchestrating modes and concepts employed to encompass them neglected the contributory modes, particularly those related to dramatic expression. In support of this, the analysis of the process of the production revealed that despite the teacher

employing initially a classic film approach, along the lines of the filmic grammar suggested by Bordwell and Thompson (2006), for the young makers the inclusion and utilisation of the contributory modes seemed an integral and 'natural' part in the building of their productions, revealing that filmic accounts such as the above might not necessarily suffice for the children's multi-layered productions.

The model I propose in the next section, then, takes account of the importance of these modes.

Secondly, it emerged that the cyclical and dialectical learning process works productively; and this operated on two levels: both between theory and practice (it translated theory into practice and vice versa) as well as between spontaneous and scientific concepts, as Engestrom (1999) has suggested in his model of the 'expansive cycles' learning. The cyclical and dialectical interchange between abstract concept and concrete application in practice, whether in photo, storyboard or film, results in learning development through complexification, as Engestrom again suggests. This dialectical process was also observed in the exchange between what Vygotsky termed spontaneous (everyday) and 'scientific' concepts, which was a recursive process rather than a one-way progression.

The 'mediational' role of reflection was of utmost importance in the above learning process, as it became apparent: whenever the young learners were given the space, time and encouragement to question both analysis and production and 'make the familiar strange', usually through collaborative interaction and discussion, along the lines of Vygotskian and socio-cultural pedagogical principles, the positive results were evident and the learning flowed.

Reflection was achieved to a great length through the use of the relevant metalanguage that gave students a tool to talk about the moving image in a systematic way that "suggests a developing ownership of the critical

concepts” (Connolly and Readman, 2017: 252). The use of metalanguage was found to facilitate the strengthening and consolidating of the related concepts and in turn it worked as a tool for subsequent and further learning.

The use of stills as a precursory activity into the learning of the moving image also proved beneficial but at the same time it was yet another terrain that manifested the complex dissonance between reflection and practice and the dynamism of learning process. It has to be stressed, that this is not a comparison study between different teaching models. The current study did not intend to check (let alone to confirm) the ‘superiority’ of the suggested model of using stills as a starting point over other models, for example starting straight away with the moving image. As a result of empirical observation (including the pilot of this study as well as my previous media teaching experience) but also in consideration of research suggesting that certain children might find the delving into moving image more confusing and problematic due to the multiplicity of modes (a multiplicity which, otherwise, we do indeed want to celebrate and promote), it was proposed that leaving aside, initially, the moving element during the first steps of teaching the moving image could be more productive in the long run. Therefore, the present study researched whether such an approach has any merit or scope. The evidence in the form of comparison between the ‘before’ and ‘after’ sets of photographs, as well as the use of language surrounding the activity, suggests that the approach taken did in fact help the children improve their learning - although clearly not in a linear way and not with the same outcomes for each child. As is the case with other subject matters, those children who already seemed to possess a certain capacity for cooperation and metacognitive reflection (either individually or as part of a group work) seemed to have made the most progress (e.g. Myrto and Aris).

Now, as a note of caution, there is always the possibility that the observation about the importance of using stills as a starting point may be more applicable to the sample in this study for the social reasons already explained and that the findings would have been different with a group of more experienced media users. But at the same time, it is likely that any class would include children with different levels of media experience whatever their geographical or socioeconomic backgrounds. A national framework therefore ought to take account of these varying needs.

In any case, it is fair to say that although overall successful, this was a very short course in media language learning. Clearly, such endeavours need to be recursive, and the students need to have opportunities to engage with the media more frequently in the course of their education. In relation to this, we need to keep in mind the fact that this was a research project. The aim hence was not to turn the young people into fully fledged - and indeed critical - filmmakers in the course of a couple of months. The research was rather meant to investigate what might be possible if a long-term commitment to media education could be guaranteed by educational policy authorities, and to identify emerging issues and hindrances that might occur during such a process.

7.3 Research Question 3

The third research question had asked what are the social and identity aspects of the children's engagement with the media? Where do the young learners draw their references from? And what aspects of themselves, their backgrounds, interests and identities do they bring into and express through their media productions?

Media not only expresses already formed and existing identities but also, in turn, forms or at least works as a means for negotiating multiple and often unknown or unrehearsed identities: both as users as well as makers of media, and both in front of as well as behind the camera (Halverson, 2010).

In terms of identity then, the media productions reveal the motivations and interests as well as the personas the makers adopt. As such, we can observe several things at presence here:

- Performance of identity: There is a strong interest in self-representation and representation of their world, in the sense of the 'performance of self' that Goffman (1956) suggests, with his reference to the way children improvise with their bodies to take inventory of them being particularly pertinent here, as mentioned previously in Chapter 6. The still photograph productions show mainly that the young people are eager to present their lives and the things they do 'in the present', as they are. In the video production, there is a different story and the world we see here is that of adults, with children experimenting with roles and behaviours of adults. This suggests that children's performance of identity is always provisional, improvisatory and fluid. Jenkins et al. (2007) model of New Media Literacies accounts for this process as it suggests that these literacies involve among other skills "Play - the capacity to experiment with one's surroundings as a form of problem-solving [and] Performance - the ability to adopt alternative identities for the purpose of improvisation and discovery" (ibid.: 4).
- Performance of gender: In particular, and as an extension of the above points, the play with gender identities rehearses and tests out possible future adult roles through the fictional characters they adopt. This recalls Butler's (1999) conception of performativity in gender roles who puts forward the argument that gender is

performative and ritual, something that constitutes identity through being enacted.

- “Greekness”: Particularly apparent in the video production was how the children explored (or, rather, based their stories on) the traditional values of Greek society: the triptych of “country”, “religion” and “family”; or at least some version of it, which albeit outdated, is still prevalent in public discourse and sought after by many.
- Sport, school, family, friends: These were the other themes the children addressed, mainly in their photographic productions of exploring the ‘now’ of their lives - as would be expected of students in this age group. Their photos were, nevertheless, enhanced, by the children’s own local flavour and treatment, offering aspects of their everyday family and social life.
- Media knowledge: Although this comes under the heading of media or film literacy, it still relates to identity in many ways as it forms children’s cultural experience in this sphere – experience of and knowledge of genre, narrative, cultural repertoires and, importantly, cultural preferences and taste. For example, we saw the young makers deploying prior knowledge of the styles and narrative structures of soap operas and police procedurals – part of their media viewing habits and hence readily available.

7.4 The 3Ds Framework

Brought together, the evidence and the ensuing discussion around the research questions above, led to several general conclusions emanating from this study. According to this, we have seen that the narrower aspects of film language are an aspect of media literacy (understanding media textuality), and that children learn this in ways that explicitly follow

the teaching in some respects, and are - more surprisingly - developed or discovered through experimental, improvisatory, fluid and dynamic processes in others. At the same time, we notice that meaning is made in modes other than those that 'media literacy' and 'film language' typically attend to: in dramatic action, speech, music, drawing. There are lessons, then, to be learned for teachers about what to notice, support and develop; and for researchers about what to consider as elements of media literacy. Finally, I am arguing that these processes of meaning-making are not decontextualised exercises, but rather represent forms of cultural exploration, forms of self-representation and identity exploration.

In turn, the above considerations have led to the devising of a unified scheme, the '3Ds Framework' that can work to explain the nature and the processes of the learning of the moving image language concepts specifically and it can complement other existing frameworks of media education with regard to these areas of interest, such as the BFI's Key Concepts model and the 3Cs model proposed by Burn & Durran (2007). This new framework has three aspects, namely Dialectic, Dramatic and Developmental.

Dialectic

We have seen that the interplay of abstract concept and material application is cyclical, multimodal, and increasingly complex and it works through the use of tools (Vygotsky, 1978) (storyboard, camera, editing kit). As such, the movement between abstract concept and material instantiation appears to involve incoherence between realisation of the concepts in different modes: in the (meta)language, in drawing, in choices of camera distance and in angle. But these contradictions and incoherencies (still thought of by Kress (2010) as 'instances of learning') challenge the apparent simplicity and fixity of the concept as taught or as represented in the pedagogy, leading to breakdown and eventual complexification of the concept in practice. A dynamic, fluid, multimodal,

performative process challenges Vygotsky's apparently simple progress from spontaneous to scientific concepts. Indeed, this movement is better captured by Engestrom's idea of expansive cycles. Examples of this in the film could be seen in the increased use of angled camera shots, sometimes evolving out of a moment of crisis or 'just-in-time' (Gee, 2007) decision-making. In the editing, an evolving grasp of temporality and hypotactic structures can be detected: inserted shots, cuts and intertitles indicating temporal-spatial movement, used again often to answer an immediate need or anxiety about comprehensibility for the audience.

Dramatic

Contrary to the established idea of the language of the moving image, as found, for example, in Bordwell and Thompson's (2006) conception of it (what Burn (2013) calls 'the orchestrating modes'), we discovered in the photos that the meaning is partly made by performative work – dress, posture, location, objects. In the film, present are the dramatic modes of speech (including intonation, volume and accent), gesture, action, and the subordinate contributory modes of drama – set, props, music, etc.

In one sense, this is the drama which is always part of live action film. In another sense, it displays the kind of play and game Caillois (1961) calls 'mimicry' that is typical of children's play.

These other modes in play remain nevertheless less explicit, except for the researcher-analyst (and even for them not always), raising the question of how far teaching should and could make these explicit. At the same time, they clearly form a substantial part of the multimodal semiotic ensemble and the children instinctively made use of them in a natural manner, as indicated earlier in the chapter. There are two issues here though: firstly, teachers may not think of them necessarily, so they too need to be alerted to the significance and workings of these other modes.

As for the learners, they also need to think of these modes more seriously, holistically and creatively.

Developmental

This aspect of the framework brings together elements discussed in the two other aspects of it above, looked here through the perspective of development, as a future-orientated and forward-looking way of approaching media education more broadly.

Firstly, this aspect involves conceptual development (in the sense analysed by Vygotsky and Engestrom). This links back to the Dialectic element, discussed just above, since it represents conceptual learning, which over the longer term can be seen as conceptual development, again in Vygotskian terms.

Secondly, the performance of identity is also developmental, and we have already seen (in the Dramatic dimension above) that it involves aspirational performance of adult roles and imagining adulthood. It also involves the playful experimentation with identities characteristic of childhood. Here, Goffman (1990) citing Sartre's observations of a waiter in a cafe is revealing. Whereas the waiter uses his bodily movements, postures and voice manipulation in order to affirm his role through these means, Sartre contrasts this with a child's play and he concludes that "the child plays with his body in order to explore it, to take inventory of it; the waiter in the café plays with his condition in order to *realize* it" (Goffman, 1990: 82, italics in the original). This kind of identity performance is seen as fluid, improvisatory and playful.

Finally, the developmental refers also to the assumption of adult professional roles in media production, in which the young makers play the part of cinematographer, editor, script writer, actor, as Halverson (2010) illustrates in her research of youth media production.

7.5 Contribution to Knowledge

The main contribution in this thesis is the development of the 3Ds framework. The focus at the granular level of children making media has led to the development of this framework. It is anticipated that this framework will be proven useful to my practice, that of other primary teachers and to future researchers alike – and to some degree to policy makers and curriculum designers. The work done on this fine-grained level and the framework developed can also be extended to take account of new forms of digital filmmaking, the context of social media and the embedding of the moving image in games. It can help film educators to connect the detailed granularity of making the moving image to the popular media resources in children's media worlds, and to the roles they play – in their films, in their filmmaking, and in their childhoods.

At the same time, the question of the conceptual understanding of the moving image and how it relates to practice is an issue that faces media and film educators around the world, in any context, and therefore it is anticipated that the proposed 3Ds model will be of value internationally.

This is evidenced by the fact that the literature review which was carried out as part of this thesis and has covered the contexts of UK, New Zealand, US, Scandinavia and Australia and looked at similar areas across these other countries, has identified that a research gap exists in this area whilst at the same time could not locate studies that have the same research focus as the present study. Having filled the gap, therefore, this study can be of use in those other contexts and in general internationally.

Furthermore, the 3Ds is a theoretical model and a contribution to an under researched area of this field, which is primary education; media teaching in primary schools is less well researched than in secondary schools as it is less formally instituted there. In this thesis, I have presented a case study which unifies media literacy and film literacy,

something which is not often done. Indeed, often people tend to fall into one or the other camp and there is some tension between them historically. In Europe, particularly, they are always closely related, but not always coherently related. This study has managed to provide a kind of blended model, a bridging theory, between the two camps: whilst the conceptual area of it relates specifically to concepts of the moving image grammar and it roots it in film education, the wider dimensions of culture and development locate it clearly within the media literacy tradition, which film education is typically much less attentive. Given that this is also a pattern found in many other national contexts, the present study can be again generally applicable and internationally employed.

In relation to the Greek context, the present study pairs up quite aptly with Eirini Arnaouti's (2014) research on similar issues in Greek secondary education. Between them, these studies could inform educational policy in Greek schools, should authorities decide to implement media education nationwide. In any case, curriculum and national implementation of media education needs to tie up with the particularities and priorities of the country, social as well as educational. Materials for investigation and study should be of relevance and interest for the young learners.

7.6 Statement of limitation

As is the case with almost all research, this study is not an exception in being inevitably partial, acknowledging at the same time the fact that any decisions involve always gains and losses. In this section I reflect on a number of limitations of this study.

To begin with, my research, like that of many others, exhibits qualities of what Clark et al. (2007: 124) call "messy research". As they say:

Researchers now employ a range of methods across a wide spectrum of methodologies that advocate emergent methods more consciously responsive to changing conditions in the field, as well as sensitive to theoretical issues of ethics, power, and authority. The issues, methodology, and methods needs cannot always be anticipated in design.

Although I indicate a design of a qualitative case study as my main methodological orientation in the Methodology chapter, out of necessity this became 'messy' in the sense Clark et al. (2007) describe above. As such, it is a case study and a cultural intervention, with concurrent elements of ethnography and action research, whilst also employing elements of multimodal analysis. As a matter of fact, this 'messiness' was inevitable and necessitated out of what the field itself dictated upon entering it: although certain decisions had been made prior to embarking into conducting the research, parameters present in the field called for certain adaptations. Specifically, it became evident that action research was not feasible due to the fact that it was not possible to identify a media teacher to collaborate with. Equally, the element of ethnographic perspective emerged in the field as it was deemed important to know more about the young participants' social lives outside school and to do so from their perspective. Nevertheless, though I acknowledge the multiplicity of methodological approaches forming the hybrid model and the fact that these had not been anticipated in advance, these approaches have led to a synthesised whole.

The attrition in the group in this research project, as was described in the Methodology chapter, constitutes another limitation and it is a well-documented feature of qualitative research, whereby recruits of the original research group withdraw at any stage for various reasons. This created problems initially as I was worried that not enough participants would remain on board to conclude the project and elicit enough data, and indeed to do so with certain richness and quality necessary for a research thesis. Nevertheless, despite the initial departure of three

students of the initial seven students after the first phase of the project, two more students joined in, which brought the total number to six, only one number shy of the original. A related limitation of the small number of participants in this study though, is that the study cannot claim much generalisability beyond the context it was conducted - an enduring critique of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Hammersley, 2008). The main orientation of the study, however, has not been to produce generalisable results but rather to look closely and in detail to a small number of case studies of primary school students making media in order to understand more fully the workings and the complexity of this process in relation to moving image language learning. There is an acknowledgement therefore that these are reflexive accounts of quite localised and small-scale nature, and that although a small number - by quantitative research standards - they still provided me with a rich repertoire of responses from the young learners. Equally, it needs to be clear that, although I have stated that the outcomes of the study could be used in educational policy, I do not imply that policy is possible to be reliably informed on the basis of a small-scale study; rather, large-scale, longitudinal studies are required for such cases, which can offer insights of a different nature.

A further limitation could be considered to be the focus on the quite specific national context of Greece – an issue that touches again upon the wider issue of generalisability. I acknowledge again here that no comparisons and generalisations can easily be made with other social and educational contexts. At the same time though, the specific focus of the study can constitute one of its strengths and it is still likely that some practitioners, even in other contexts, may identify here elements common to their own settings.

A final limitation of the study might be the decision to focus on learning outcomes. This has meant that I could not include a full analysis of the

teaching aspect of the pedagogy, although allusions have been made on the teaching principles followed and occasional references to significant teaching inputs have also been provided.

7.7 Next steps

On the matter of media and film education in Greece, more research is needed drawing on my work and Arnaouti's (2014). Beyond this, we need to connect with policymakers in the country to propose new curricular initiatives based on the research evidence. Ideally, this would also lead to teacher in-service training in relation to media and film education but also to the provision of media education modules in the Universities for those studying to become teachers – currently such courses are virtually absent. Whatever form this takes, even if it happens at grassroots, it needs to connect to the cultural interests, customs and experiences of young people in the country (Voros, 2015). It also needs to provide opportunities for practical media work exploring contemporary political issues concerning the country, such as immigration, the economic crisis and the rise of the far right, with particular emphasis on how these issues are being portrayed in the media and how children can critically reflect on their responses to these matters.

The wider context and into the future

Digital media has brought about profound changes in the field of education (Potter and McDougall, 2017) but also in the wider societal landscape, with the multiliteracies paradigm (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000) describing the implications for meaning-making quite aptly. As a result of these changes and the possibilities new media afford, new genres are being constantly developed and new ways of telling stories are being invented. However, the abiding principles of design and the constituent elements of the moving image language remain largely the same. As such

the points made above regarding the moving image language and its teaching and learning still hold currency.

Subsequent research has not yet revealed studies with similar research questions – and certainly not in relation to the Greek context. Conditions in the country have changed, as anywhere in the world, since the time the study was conducted, but general trends (some of them endemic to the country) still remain, such as communities with little media involvement and the differences between urban areas (cities) and periphery being still noticeable in the country. The experiences the children have and their involvement with popular and media culture, particularly with producing media, are still not even throughout the country – despite globalisation, the exponential growth of media and the widespread appeal of them. In many communities and contexts, ‘media savvy kids’ and ‘digital natives’ are not necessarily the prevailing paradigm among young people (Mills, 2010). Despite this, there is nevertheless a strong argument for media education, and indeed for a nation-wide provision as a basic entitlement in the school curriculum in the Greek context. Not just in anticipation and as a form of protection from the ‘media challenges’ that eventually these communities – as everywhere else – will be confronted with, but predominantly as a means for young people throughout the country to enhance their expression and enjoyment of media.

References

- Agar, M. (1996) *The Professional Stranger: An Informal Introduction to Ethnography* (2nd ed.). San Diego, California Academic Press.
- Arnaouti, E. (2014) *The cultural and creative function of moving image literacy in the subject of English in the Greek secondary school*. Unpublished doctoral thesis, Institute of Education, University of London.
- Arnaouti, E. (2017) The affective function of a Greek animation-making project, *Journal of Media Practice*, 18 (2-3), 88-102.
- Bhana, D. (2008) Six packs and big muscles and stuff like that. Primary school-aged South African boys, black and white, on sport. *British Journal of Sociology*, 29(1), 3-14.
- Bailey, J. M., Bechtold, K., & Berenbaum, S. A. (2002) Who Are Tomboys and Why Should We Study Them?. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 31(4), 333-341.
- Bazalgette C. (1989) *Primary media education: a curriculum statement*. London, BFI Education.
- Bazalgette, C. (2008a) The Development of Media Education in England: A Personal View. In: J. Flood, S. Heath and D. Lapp (Eds.) *Handbook of research on teaching literacy through the communicative and visual arts. Volume II*. New York, Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Bazalgette, C. (2008b) Literacy in time and space, *POV*, 1(1), 12-16.
- Bazalgette, C. (2009) *Impacts of Moving Image Education: a Summary of Research*. Glasgow, Scottish Screen.
- Bazalgette, C. (2022) *Some secret language: how toddlers learn to understand movies*. London, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Beach, R., & Doerr-Stevens, C. (2009) Learning argument practices through online role-play: Toward a rhetoric of significance and transformation. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 52(6), 460-468.
- Bezemer, J. & Kress, G. (2015) *Multimodality, Learning and Communication: A Social Semiotic Frame*. London, Routledge.

BFI Film Education Working Group (1999) *Making Movies Matter*. London, British Film Institute.

BFI Primary Education Working Group (2003) *Look Again!: A teaching guide to using film and television with three to eleven-year olds*. London, British Film Institute.

Bloome, D. (2011) Classroom Ethnography. In Grenfell, M., Bloome, D., Hardy, C., Pahl, K., Rowsell, J. and Street, B. *Language, Ethnography and Education: Bridging New Literacy Studies and Bourdieu*. New York, Routledge.

Bordwell, D., & Thompson, K. (1993) *Film art: An introduction*. (4th ed.), New York, McGraw-Hill.

Bordwell, D., & Thompson, K. (2006) *Film art: An introduction*. (8th ed.), New York, McGraw-Hill.

Bowley, B. (2013) Soft boys, tough boys and the making of young sporty masculinities at a private boys' school. *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity*, 27(3), 87-93.

Brereton, P. (2001) *The Continuum guide to media education*, Continuum, London.

British Educational Research Association [BERA] (2018) Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research. 4th. ed. London. Available from: <https://www.bera.ac.uk/researchers-resources/publications/ethicalguidelines-for-educational-research-2018> [Accessed 18th June 2018].

Buckingham, D. (1990) *Watching Media Learning: Making Sense of Media Education*. Basingstoke, Falmer Press.

Buckingham, D. (2003) *Media Education: Literacy, Learning and Contemporary Culture*. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Buckingham, D. (2008) Introducing Identity. In: Buckingham, D. (Ed.) *Youth, Identity, and Digital Media*. Cambridge, MA, MIT Press.

Buckingham, D. (2014) The Success and Failure of Media Education. *Media Education Research Journal*. 4(2), 5-18.

Buckingham, D. (2018) *Media literacy policy in Europe: where are we going?*. Available from: <https://davidbuckingham.net/2018/05/18/media-literacy-policy-in-europe-where-are-we-going/> [Accessed 10th September 2022].

Buckingham, D., (2019) *The Media Education Manifesto*. Cambridge, Polity.

Buckingham, D. & Sefton-Green, J. (1994) *Cultural studies goes to school: Reading and Teaching Popular Media*. London, Taylor and Francis.

Buckingham, D., Grahame, J. & Sefton-Green, J. (1995) *Making Media: Practical Production in Media Education*. London, The English and Media Centre.

Bulman, J. H. (2017) *Children's reading of film and visual literacy in the primary curriculum: a progression framework model*. Cham, Palgrave.

Burgess, R. G. (Ed.) (1982) *Field research: a sourcebook and field manual*. London, Allen & Unwin.

Burgess, R.G. (Ed.) (1989) *The Ethics of educational research*. London, Falmer.

Burn, A. (2003) 'Two Tongues Occupy My Mouth': Poetry, Performance and the Moving Image. *English in Education*. 37 (3), 41-50.

Burn A. (2009) *Making New Media: Creative Production and Digital Literacies*. New York, Peter Lang.

Burn, A. (2010) A very long engagement: English and the moving image. In Wyse D., Andrews, R. & Hoffman, J. (Eds.), *The Routledge International Handbook of English, Language and Literacy Teaching*. London, Routledge.

Burn, A. (2013) *The kineikonic mode: Towards a multimodal approach to moving image media*, National Centre for Research Methods Working Paper.

Burn, A. & Parker, D. (2001a) Making your mark: digital inscription, animation and a new visual semiotic. *Education, Communication & Information*. 1(2), 155-179.

Burn, A. & Parker, D. (2001b) Reading Films, Selling Chocolate. *The English and Media Magazine*. 45, 33-38.

Burn, A. & Parker, D. (2003) *Analysing Media Texts*. London, Continuum.

Burn, A. & Durran, J. (2007) *Media literacy in schools: practice, production and progression*. London, Paul Chapman.

Burn, A. & Durrant, C. (Eds.) (2008) *Media Teaching: Language, Audience and Production*. Kent Town, Wakefield Press.

Burn, A. & Durran, J. (2013) Digital Anatomies: Analysis as Production in Media Education. In: Buckingham, D. & Willett, R. (Eds.) *Digital Generations: Children, Young People, and New Media*. Oxon, Routledge.

Burn, A., Potter, J. & Reid, M. (2014) Media arts, digital culture and education. *Media Education Research Journal*. 5(1), 5-14.

Butler, J. (1999) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (2nd ed.), New York, Routledge.

Caillois, R. (1961) *Man, Play and Games*. (trans. Meyer Barash). Chicago, University of Illinois Press.

Cameron D. (1997) *Performing Gender Identity: Young Men's Talk and the Construction of Heterosexual Masculinity*. In Johnson, S. and Meinhof, U. H. (Eds.) *Language and Masculinity*. Oxford, Blackwell.

Carroll, J. (2002) Digital drama: a snapshot of evolving forms, *Melbourne Studies in Education*, 43(2), 130–141.

Carspecken, P. F. (1996) *Critical ethnography in educational research: a theoretical and practical guide*. London, Routledge.

Chan, C. (2005) Review of *Analysing Media Texts* by Andrew Burn and David Parker. In *Education, Communication & Information*, 5(1), 96.

Clark, C., Brody, M., Dillon, J., Hart, P. & Heimlich, J. (2007) The Messy Process of Research: Dilemmas, Process, and Critique. *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, 12, 110-126.

Clark, A. (2014) Developing and Adapting the Mosaic Approach. In Clark, A., Flewitt, R., Hammersley, M. and Robb, M. (Eds.) *Understanding Research with Children and Young People*. London, Sage.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. (2007) *Research methods in education* (6th ed). London, Routledge.

Coiro, J., & Dobler, B. (2007) Exploring the online reading comprehension strategies used by sixth-grade skilled readers to search for and locate information on the Internet. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 42, 214–257.

Collier, D. R. (2015) “I’m just trying to be tough, okay”: Masculine performances of everyday practices. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 15(2), 203–226.

Connolly, S. (2008) Using video production work to teach about the language of the moving image. In: Burn, A. & Durrant, C. (Eds.) *Media teaching: language, audience and production*. Wakefield Press in association with The Australian Association for the Teaching of English, Kent Town, pp. 29-47.

Connolly, S. & Readman, M. (2017) Towards ‘Creative Media Literacy’. In: De Abreu, B., Mihailidis, P., Y.L. Lee, A., Melki, J. & McDougall, J. (Eds.) *International Handbook of Media Literacy Education*. New York, Routledge, pp. 245-259.

Cope, B. & Kalantzis, M. (2000) *Multiliteracies: literacy learning and the design of social futures*. London, Routledge.

Currie, D. H., Kelly, D. M., Pomerantz, S. (2009) ‘Girl Power’: *Girls Reinventing Girlhood*. Oxford, Peter Lang.

Cuthell, J. (2002) *Virtual Learning: the impact of ICT on the way young people work and learn*. Aldershot, Ashgate.

Daitsman, J. (2011) Exploring Gender Identity in Early Childhood Through Story Dictation and Dramatization. *Voices of Practitioners*, 6(1), 1-12.

Davis, S. (2011) Digital Drama: Toolkits, Dilemmas, and Preferences. *Youth Theatre Journal*. 25(2), 103-119.

De Block, L., Buckingham, D. (2007) *Global Children, Global Media: Migration, Media and Childhood*. London, Palgrave Macmillan.

De Block, L., Buckingham D. & Banaji, S. (2005) *Children in Communication about Migration (CHICAM): Final Report*. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg. Available from: https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10000614/1/de_Block%282005%29CHICAM_final_report.pdf [Accessed 20th May 2018].

De Laine, M. (2000) *Fieldwork, participation and practice: ethics and dilemmas in qualitative research*. Sage, London.

DeNora, T. (2000) *Music in everyday life*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Domaille, K. (2014) Review of *Children, Film and Literacy* by Becky Parry. In: *Media Education Research Journal*, 4(2), 93-95.

Domaille, K. & Buckingham, D. (2001) *Unesco Youth Media Education Survey 2001*. Available from: https://www.academia.edu/26297271/Youth_media_education_survey_2001 [Accessed 20th September 2019].

Drotner, K. (1989) Girl Meets Boy: Aesthetic Production, Reception, and Gender Identity. *Cultural Studies*, 3(2), 208-225.

Dyson, A. H. (1997) *Writing superheroes: Contemporary childhood, popular culture, and classroom literacy*, New York, Teachers College Press.

EKOME website. (2021) Available from: <https://www.ekome.media/> [Accessed 3rd December 2021].

Elliott, J. (1991) *Action Research for Educational Change*. Buckingham, Open University Press.

Emerson, A. (1993) *Teaching media in the primary school*. London, Cassell.

Emerson, R. M. (1981) Observational Field Work. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 7, 351-378.

Engeström, Y. (1999) Learning by Expanding: Ten Years After. Available from: <https://lchc.ucsd.edu/mca/Paper/Engestrom/expanding/intro.htm> [Accessed 20th August 2021].

Engeström, Y. (2001) Expansive Learning at Work: toward an activity theoretical reconceptualization. *Journal of Education and Work*, 14(1), 133-156.

Evertson, C. M. & Green, J. L. (1986) Observation as Inquiry and Method. In Wittrock, M. C. (Ed.) *Handbook of research on teaching* (3rd ed.). New York, Macmillan, pp. 162-228

Ferguson, B. (1981) Practical work and pedagogy. *Screen Education*, 38, 42-55.

Gee, J. P. (2005) *An introduction to discourse analysis: theory and method*. (2nd ed.). New York, Routledge.

Gee, J. P. (2007) *What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy* (2nd ed.). Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Giddens, A. (1991) *Modernity and Self Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Goffman, E. (1956) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Edinburgh, University of Edinburgh Social Sciences Research Centre.

Goffman, E. (1976) *Gender advertisements*. New York, Harper and Row.

Goffman, E. (1990) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. (15th ed.). London, Penguin.

Goodwyn, A. (2005), The role of media education, In Goodwyn, A. & Branson, J. (eds.), *Teaching English: A handbook for primary and secondary school teachers*. London, Routledge.

Greek Pedagogical Institute (2002) A Cross Thematic Curriculum Framework for Compulsory Education. Available from: http://www.pi-schools.gr/programs/depps/index_eng.php [Accessed 7th March 2018].

Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). *Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning*. London, Edward Arnold.

Halliday, M.A.K. (1989) *Spoken and written language*. (2nd ed.). Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1994) *An introduction to functional grammar* (2nd ed.). London, Edward Arnold.

Halverson, E. R. (2010), Film as Identity Exploration: A Multimodal Analysis of Youth-Produced Films. *Teachers College Record*, 112(9), 2352–2378.

Hammersley, M. (2006) Ethnography: problems and prospects. *Ethnography and Education*, 1(1), 3-14.

Hawley, S. (2020) The Sociomateriality of Literacy: a Study of the Relationship Between Institutions, Identity and the Internet in a Primary Classroom. Doctoral thesis (Ph.D), UCL (University College London).

Hartai, L. (2014) *Formal Media Education in Europe*, Barcelona, Gabinete de Comunicación y Educación, UAB, p. 1.

Hatzisavvidis, S. (2005) From literacy pedagogy to multiliteracies. In Balaskas, K., Aggelakos, K. (eds.) *Language and literature in primary and secondary education*. Athens, Metahmio, (in Greek).

Hebdige, D. (1979) *Subculture: the meaning of style*, London, Routledge.

Hodge, B., Tripp, D. (1986) *Children and television: a semiotic approach*, Cambridge, Polity.

Hull, G. A. & Katz, M. (2006) Crafting an agentive self: Case studies of digital storytelling. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 41(1), 43–81.

Jenkins, H., Clinton, K., Purushotma, R., Robison, A. J., & Weigel, M. (2007) *Confronting the challenges of participatory culture: Media education for the 21st century*. Available from: https://www.macfound.org/media/article_pdfs/jenkins_white_paper.pdf [Accessed 25th May 2020].

Jolls, T., & Wilson, C. (2014). The Core Concepts: Fundamental to Media Literacy Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow. *Journal of Media Literacy Education*, 6(2), 68-78.

Jones, R., (2013) Multimodal discourse analysis. In: Chapelle. C. A. (Ed.) *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*. London, Blackwell.

Jorge, A. (2015) 'Cristiano Ronaldo is cheap chic, Twilight actors are special': young audiences of celebrities, class and locality. *Celebrity Studies*, 6(1), 39–53.

KARPOS (2019) Program of Study for Audiovisual Education: Guidelines for a 'loose' Curriculum, for all levels of Compulsory Education

as part of the National Curriculum. Available from: <https://www.theodoridis.info/menis/en/curriculum-for-audiovisual-education/> [Accessed 10th August 2021].

KARPOS (2020) Teacher's Guide for Audiovisual Education (for all levels of Compulsory Education as part of the National Curriculum). Available from: <https://www.theodoridis.info/menis/en/curriculum-for-audiovisual-education/> [Accessed 10th August 2021].

Keller, J. (2014) Critical Girls: Girl Power Revisited. Book review on Hains, R. C. (2012) Growing Up with Girl Power: Girlhood on Screen and in Everyday Life. *Girlhood Studies*, 7(2), 142-145.

Kourti, L. (2002) Children and Media: Greece. In Buckingham, D. (Ed.) *Children and Media*. Available at: http://www.chicam.net/media/pdf/DEL1_part2.pdf [Accessed 11th June 2017].

Kress, G. (2009) *A social-semiotic theory of multimodality*. London, Routledge.

Kress, G. (2010) *Multimodality: A Social Semiotic Approach to Contemporary Communication*. London, Routledge.

Kress, G. & van Leeuwen, T. (2001) *Multimodal Discourse: the modes and media of contemporary communication*. London, Arnold.

Kress, G. & van Leeuwen, T. (2006) *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* (2nd ed.). London, Routledge.

Lankshear, C. & Knobel, M. (2004) *A Handbook of teacher research: from design to implementation*. Maidenhead, Open University Press.

Leach, J. & Burn, A. (2004) ICT and moving image literacy in English. In: Andrews, R. (ed.) *The Impact of ICT on literacy education*. London, Routledge Falmer, pp. 153-179.

Leavis, F. R., Thompson, D. (1933) *Culture and Environment: The training of critical awareness*. London, Chatto and Windus.

Lewis, C., & Fabos, B. (2005). Instant messaging, literacies, and social identities. *Reading Research Quarterly*. 40(4), 470–501.

Loerts, T. S. (2013) *Multimodal Literacy Learning Opportunities in One Grade Six Classroom: Possibilities and Constraints*. Unpublished PhD

thesis. Available from:
<https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3106&context=etd>
[Accessed 3rd September 2020].

Lin, T., Kim, A., Voros, K., & Fabbro, F. (2008) Media education in South Europe and East Asia: a comparative study of Greece, Italy, South Korea and Taiwan. *Media Education Journal*, 44, 28-33.

Lomax, H., Casey, N. (1998) Recording Social Life: Reflexivity and Video Methodology. *Sociological Research Online*. 3(2), 121-146.

Lowndes, D. (1968) *Film Making in Schools*. London, Batsford.

Lukenchuk, A. (2017) Methodology: Choosing among Paradigms and Research Designs. In: *Outliving Your Dissertation: A Guide for Students and Faculty*. *Counterpoints*, 428, 57-85.

Marsh, J. (2007), icurricula, ipedagogies and outmoded ideologies: literacy teaching and learning in the digital era, in *Future directions in literacy: International conversations conference 2007*, Edited by Alyson Simpson, University of Sydney, Sydney.

Marsh, J. & Millard, E. (2000) *Literacy and Popular Culture: Using children's culture in the classroom*. London, Paul Chapman.

Marsh, J. & Bearne, E. (2008) *Moving Literacy On: Evaluation of the BFI Lead Practitioner Scheme for moving image media literacy*, Sheffield, UKLA / The University of Sheffield.

Masterman, L. (1980) *Teaching About Television*. London, Macmillan.

Masterman, L. (1985) *Teaching the Media*. London, Comedia

Masterman, L. (2002) 'Down Cemetery Road': why the BFI's proposals for moving image education are no good. Heswall, Alpha Media.

McDougall, J. & Potter, J. (2019) Digital media learning in the third space. *Media Practice and Education*, 20(1), 1-11.

McKenzie, J. (2005) Performance studies. In Groden, M., Kreiswirth, M., Szeman, I. (Eds.), *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism* (2nd ed.). Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press.

McLaren, P. (2016) *Life in Schools: An Introduction to Critical Pedagogy* (6th ed.). Oxton, Routledge.

McNiff, J. and J. Whitehead (2005) *Action Research for Teachers: A Practical Guide*. London, David Fulton Publishers.

Melina project (2015), Melina project webpage. Available from: www.prmelina.gr, [Last accessed 12th March 2015, no longer functioning].

Merriam, S. (1998) *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*. San Francisco: CA, Jossey-Bass.

Metz, C. (1974) *Film language: a semiotics of the cinema*. New York, Oxford University Press.

Moll, L. C., Armanti, C., Neff, D. & Gonzalez, N. (1992) Funds of knowledge for teaching: using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into Practice*, 31(2), 132–141.

New London Group (2000) A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. In: Cope, B. & Kalantzis, M. (Eds.), *Multiliteracies: Literacy learning and the design of social futures*. London, Routledge, pp. 9-38.

O'Sullivan, T., Hartley, J., Saunders, D., Montgomery, M. & Fiske, J. (1994) *Key Concepts in Communication and Cultural Studies* (2nd ed.). London, Routledge.

OCR (2013) The OCR Guide to Storyboards. Available from: <https://www.ocr.org.uk/> [Accessed 26/6/2022].

OFCOM (2004) Ofcom's strategy and priorities for promoting media literacy: a summary. Available from: https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0021/58206/plain_english.pdf [Accessed 30/06/2018].

Oliver, K. L., Hamzeh, M. & McCaughtry, N. (2009) Girly Girls Can Play Games / Las Niñas Pueden Jugar Tambien: Co-Creating a Curriculum of Possibilities With Fifth-Grade Girls. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 28, 90-110.

Olympia Children's Film Festival (2016) Olympia Children's Film Festival webpage. Available from: <https://olympiafestival.gr/> [Accessed 10/04/16].

Oyserman, D., Elmore, K. & Smith, G. (2012) Self, Self-Concept, and Identity. In: Leary, M. & Tangney, J. (Eds.) *Handbook of Self and Identity*. London, The Guildford Press.

Parker, D. (2001) Moving Image Media and Future Literacies: The Role of Cineliteracy in Curriculum Development. *The International Journal of Art and Design Education*, 20(3), 296-301.

Parker-Jenkins, M. (2018) Problematising ethnography and case study: reflections on using ethnographic techniques and researcher positioning. *Ethnography and Education*, 13(1), 18-33.

Parry, B. (2013) *Children, Film and Literacy*. London, Palgrave Macmillan.

Pashalidis, G. (2000) Education and Mass Communication. *Paidagogiki Epitheorisi*. 30/2000, 17-34, (in Greek).

Patton, M. Q. (1990) *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.), Sage, London.

Pelletier, C. (2007) Producing Gender in Digital Interactions: What Young People Set Out to Achieve through Computer Game Design. In Weber, S. and Dixon, S. (Eds.) *Growing Up Online: Young People and Digital Technologies*. New York, Palgrave Macmillan.

Pelletier, C. (2008) Gaming in Context: How Young People Construct Their Gendered Identities in Playing and Making Games. In Kafai, Y. B., Heeter, C., Denner, J., Sun, J., Nyugen, M., Pirno, M., Jenkins, H., Cassell, J., Laurel, B., Brunner, C. (Eds.) *Beyond Barbie and Mortal Kombat: New Perspectives on Gender and Gaming*. Cambridge, MIT Press.

Peters, J. (1961) *Teaching about Film, Press, Radio and Television in the World Today*. Lausanne, UNESCO.

Poole, C. (2005) How to Introduce Media Literacy to Schools. In: University of Tampere Proceedings of the Media Skills and Competence conference. Tampere, Finland.

Potter, J. (2005) "This brings back a lot of memories": a case study in the analysis of digital video production by young learners. *Education, Communication & Information*, 5(1), 5-23.

Potter, J. (2009) Curating the self: media literacy and identity in digital video production by young learners Unpublished research thesis. Institute of Education, University of London.

Potter, J. (2012a) *Digital media and learner identity: The new curatorship*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Potter, J. (2012b) Digital video production and learner identity. In: Govas, N. (Ed.) *Videomuseums: recording traces of our subjective culture*. Athens, Attica Directorate of Secondary Education.

Potter, J. (2013) Media education and the new curatorship: principles and entitlement for learners. *Media Education Research Journal*, 3(2), 76-87.

Potter, J. & Banaji, S. (2012) Social Media and Self-curatorship: Reflections on Identity and Pedagogy through Blogging on a Masters Module. *Comunicar, Scientific Journal of Media Education*. 38(XIX), 83-91.

Potter, J. & McDougall, J. (2017) *Digital Media, Culture and Education: theorising third space literacies*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Potter, J. & Cowan, K. (2020) Playground as meaning-making space: Multimodal making and re-making of meaning in the (virtual) playground. *Global Studies of Childhood*, 10(3), 248-263.

Renold E. (2007) Primary school studs: (De) constructing young heterosexual masculinities. *Men and Masculinities Journal*, 9(3), 275-297.

Richards, C. (2012) Playing under surveillance: gender, performance and the conduct of the self in a primary school playground. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 33(3), 373-390.

Robinson, M. (2000): What is(n't) this subject called English? In Davison, J. & Moss, J. (Eds.) *Issues in English Teaching*. Routledge, London.

Rwodzi, C., De Jager, L. & Mpofu, N. (2020) The innovative use of social media for teaching English as a second language. *The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa*. 16(1), 1-7. Available from <https://td-sa.net/index.php/td/article/view/702/1174> [Accessed 22nd January 2021].

Salih, S. (2002) *Judith Butler*. New York, Taylor & Francis Group.

Scott, F., & Marsh, J. (2018) Digital Literacies in Early Childhood. *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Education*. Available from <https://oxfordre.com/education/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.001.0001/acrefore-9780190264093-e-97?rskey=8fwawD&result=1> [Accessed 4th June 2022].

Seale, C. (2002) Quality Issues in Qualitative Inquiry. *Qualitative Social Work*, 1(1), 97-110.

Sefton-Green, J. (1998) 'Writing' media: an investigation of practical production in media education by secondary school students. Unpublished PhD thesis. London, University of London, Institute of Education.

Sefton-Green J. & Parker D. (2000) *Edit-Play: How children use entertainment software to tell stories*. London, BFI.

Sharples, M., Davison, L., Thomas, G. & Rudman, P. (2003) Children as photographers: an analysis of children's photographic behaviour and intentions at three age levels. *Visual Communication*. 2(3), 303-330.

Silverman, D. (2001) *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction* (2nd ed.). London, Sage.

Simons, H. & Usher, R. (2000) Introduction: ethics in the practice of research. In: Simons, H. & Usher, R. (Eds.) *Situated Ethics in Educational Research*. London, Routledge Falmer.

Soep, E. (2005) Making Hard-Core Masculinity: Teenage Boys Playing House. In Lipsitz, G., Soep, E., Maira, S. *Youthscape: The Popular, the National, the Global*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 173-191.

Solmon, J. (2016) Gender Identity and Expression in the Early Childhood Classroom: Influences on Development Within Sociocultural Contexts. *YC Young Children*, 71(3), 61-72.

Stake, R. (2008) Qualitative Case Studies. In Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (eds) *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage.

Street, B. (1984) *Literacy in Theory and Practice*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Street, B. (2003) What's "new" in new literacy studies? Critical approaches to literacy in theory and practice. *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, 5(2), 77-91.

Stringer, E. T. (1996) *Action Research: A Handbook for Practitioners*. London, Sage.

Sutton-Smith, B. (1997) *The ambiguity of play*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.

Swain, J. (2006) The role of sport in the promotion of masculinity in an English independent junior school. *Sport, Education and Society Journal*, 11(4), 317-335.

Swann, J. & Kehily, M. J. (Eds.) (2003) *Children's cultural worlds*. Chichester, Open University.

Theodoridis, M. (2008) Cinema and children: an attempt in charting the Field. In Kourti, E. (Ed.) *Childhood and Cinema*. Ellinika Grammata, Athens, (in Greek).

Thessaloniki Film Festival (2018), Thessaloniki Film Festival webpage. Available from: <https://www.filmfestival.gr/en/> [Accessed 12th April 2018].

Thomas, G. & Pring, R. (2004) *Evidence-Based Practice in Education*. Maidenhead, Open University Press.

Thorne, B. (1993) *Gender Play: girls and boys in school*. New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press.

Tobin, J. (2000) *'Good guys don't wear hats': children's talk about the media*. New York, Teachers College Press.

Usher, P. (2000) Feminist approaches to a situated ethics. In: Simons, H. & Usher, R. (Eds.) *Situated Ethics in Educational Research*. London, Routledge Falmer.

Van Leeuwen, T. (1999) *Speech, Music, Sound*. Basingstoke, Macmillan Press.

Van Leeuwen, T. (2021) *Multimodality and Identity*. London, Routledge.

Tzifopoulos, M. (2020) In the shadow of Coronavirus: Distance education and digital literacy skills in Greece. *International Journal of Social Science and Technology*, 5(2), 1-14.

Vasudevan, L., Schultz, K., & Bateman, J. (2010) Rethinking composing in a digital age: authoring literate identities through multimodal storytelling. *Written Communication*, 27(4), 442-468.

Voros, K. (2015) Media Education in Greece: Antecedents and the New Challenges in a Time of Crisis. In: Kotilainen, S. & Kupiainen, R. (Eds.) Yearbook 2015: Reflections on Media Education Futures, The International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media. Nordicom, Gothenburg, pp. 269-278.

Vygotsky, L. (1978) *Mind in society: the development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. (1986) *Thought and Language*. Cambridge, MA, MIT Press.

Wadsworth, Y. (1997) *Everyday Evaluation on The Run* (2nd ed.). London, Allen & Unwin.

Walford, G. (Ed.) (2002) *Doing a doctorate in educational ethnography*. Boston, JAI Elsevier.

Wallis, C. (2011) Performing Gender: A Content Analysis of Gender Display in Music Videos. *Sex Roles*, 64, 160–172.

Wallis, R. & Buckingham, D. (2019) Media literacy: the UK's undead cultural policy. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 25(2), 188-203.

Willett, R. (2011) An ethnographic study of preteen girls' play with popular music on a school playground in the UK. *Journal of Children and Media*. 5 (4), 341-357.

YPEPTH-Pedagogical Institute (2001a) *Creative-Cross curricular activities for the flexible zone in primary school*. Athens, OEDV, (in Greek).

YPEPTH-Pedagogical Institute (2001b) *Thematic book for the flexible zone in primary school*. Athens, OEDV, (in Greek).

Appendices

APPENDIX A - PHOTOGRAPHIC CODING SCHEMES

Table 1: Sharples et al. (2003, p. 327-328)
Photographic Content Coding Scheme:

P H O C T O N G R E A X P T H Y	P	Indoors						
		Outdoors						
		Don't know						
	H O C T O N G R E A X P T H Y	Domestic interior						
		Educational						
		Commercial						
		Entertainment/recreational						
		Urban/suburban						
		Countryside						
		Bank/beach/shore/water						
		Underwater						
		Garden/park						
		In vehicle						
		Other						
		Don't know						
	T I M E	Day						
		Night						
		Twilight						
		Don't know						
S U B J E C T	People	Child/children						
		Adult/adults						
		1 person						
		2 people						
		3 people						
	Body	More than 3 people						
		Body part/back view						
		Male/males						
	Character	Female/females						
		Make believe character/costume						
C	Animal	Animal/animals						
	Buildings	Building/buildings						
		Cityscape						

T M A T T E R	me	Toy/ga							
	Food/drink								
	Manmade/ Crafted								
	Transpo								
	Object	Audio-visual equipment							
		Pictures/photo/p oster							
		Fixed relief/statue/sculpture							
		Fireworks/lighting effects							
		Other							

Content Coding Scheme (continued)

S U B J E C T	M A T T E R	Landsca							
		pe							
		Watersca							
		pe							
		Nature							
		Plants/trees							
		Natural phenomena							
		Other							
		Sports							
		Sporting activities							
		Don't Know							
J U D G E M E N T	Viewer	Humorous/silly							
		Unusual subject							
		Impact							
		Unusual angle							
		Artistic Exhibition quality							
		Focus							
		Technical							
		Camera							
		Shake							
		Quality							
		Overexpos							
		Underexposed							
ed	Staging	Ceremonial							
		Pose							
		d/staged							
		Don't know							
		Main Subject							

Table 2: Modified Photographic Content Coding Scheme to include 'Media Language' category:

M A	Framing	Close up
		Medium shot
E N	Orientation	Long shot
		Portrait
D G	Angle	Landscape
		Eye-level
I U		Low angle
		High angle
A A		Tilted
		Composition
G		Background / foreground
		Lighting
E		
P		Indoors
		Outdoors
H O	C	Don't know
T O	N	Domestic interior
		Educational
G T	E	Commercial
		Entertainment/recreational
R E	X	Urban/suburban
		Countryside
A P	T	Bank/beach/shore/water
		Underwater
H I		Garden/park
		In vehicle
C		Other
		Don't know
T I		Day
		Night
M E		Twilight
		Don't know
S U	People	Child/children
		Adult/adults
B J		1 person
		2 people
		3 people
		More than 3 people
		Body part/back view
		Male/males
		Female/females
		Make believe characters
E	Animal	Animal/animals
C	Buildings	Building/buildings
		Cityscape
T	Manmade/	
		Toy/game
		Food/drink

M	Crafted Object	Transport
		Audio-visual equipment
		Pictures/photo/poster
		Other
A	Nature	Landscape
		Waterscape
T		Plants/trees
		Natural phenomena
T		Other
T	Movement	Human
E		Animal
		Manmade object
		Natural object
R		Don't know
	Sports	Sporting activities
J	Viewer Impact	Humorously/silly
U		Unusual subject
D		Unusual angle
		Artistic
G	Technical Quality	Exhibition quality
E		Focus
M		Camera Shake
		Overexposed
E		Underexposed
N		Use of flash
T	Staging	Ceremonial
		Posed/staged
		Non-staged

Table 3: The results of the coding scheme for the four children who completed both the 'before' and 'after' sets and comparison between the two sets:

Total number of photos taken				72	95
				BEFORE	AFTER
M	A	Framing	Close up	0	5
			Medium shot	22	19
			Long shot	36	50
E	N	Orientation	Portrait	9	22
			Landscape	46	56
D	G	Angle	Eye-level	56	72
			Low angle	1	3
I	U		High angle	0	3
			Tilted	3	2
A	A	Composition			
		Background / foreground			
G					
			Lighting		

E

		Indoors	16	31
		Outdoors	43	29
P		Don't know		
H		Domestic interior	7	20
O	C	Educational	25	7
T	O	Commercial		
O	N	Entertainment/recreational	13	24
G	T	Urban/suburban	14	12
R	E	Countryside	0	4
A	X	Bank/beach/shore/water		
P	T	Underwater		
H		Garden/park		
I		In vehicle	1	0
C		Other		
		Don't know		
T		Day	53	61
I		Night	2	2
M		Twilight		
E		Don't know		
		Child/children	47	46
		Adult/adults	4	6
		1 person	25	37
S	People	2 people	10	1
		3 people	6	2
U		More than 3 people	8	6
		Body part/back view	2	0
B		Male/males	32	24
		Female/females	17	27
J		Make believe characters		
	Animal	Animal/animals		
E				
	Buildings	Building/buildings	3	2
C		Cityscape	3	
T	Manmade/ Crafted Object	Toy/game	0	3
		Food/drink		
		Transport	2	1
		Audio-visual equipment		
		Pictures/photo/poster	0	2
M		Other		
A	Nature	Landscape	0	1
		Waterscape		
		Plants/trees	0	1
T		Natural phenomena		
		Other		
T		Human	13	12
		Animal		
E	Movement	Manmade object	1	0
		Natural object		
R		Don't know		

	Sports	Sporting activities	11	12
J U D	Viewer Impact	Humorously/silly		
		Unusual subject	1	0
		Unusual angle		
		Artistic		
G E M E N	Technical Quality	Exhibition quality	0	1
		Focus	49	62
		Camera Shake	4	6
		Overexposed	1	3
T	Staging	Underexposed	10	13
		Use of flash	7	18
		Ceremonial		
		Posed/staged	25	27
		Non-staged	23	36
		Don't know		

Table 4: Results of sub-case study 1, Giannis, in relation to 'Media Language' category:

	Before	After	Total
	7	29	36
Focus	3	25	28
Camera Shake	1	2	3
Overexposed	1	1	2
Underexposed	2	0	2
Use of flash	0	3	3
Close up	0	0	0
Medium shot	5	4	9
Long shot	2	24	26
Portrait	0	15	15
Landscape	5	12	17
Eye-level	6	26	32
Low angle	0	1	1
High angle	0	0	0
Tilted	1	2	3

Table 5: Results of sub-case study 2, Renalnto, in relation to 'Media Language' category:

	Before	After	Total
	27	27	54
Focus	23	11	34
Camera Shake	1	1	2
Overexposed	0	0	0

Underexposed	2	8	10
Use of flash	1	0	1
Close up	0	4	4
Medium shot	1	3	4
Long shot	24	10	34
Portrait	5	2	7
Landscape	19	15	34
Eye-level	25	17	42
Low angle	0	0	0
High angle	0	0	0
Tilted	1	0	1

Table 6: Results of sub-case study 3, Myrto, in relation to 'Media Language' category:

	Before	After	Total
	11	27	38
Focus	7	17	24
Camera Shake	1	2	3
Overexposed	0	2	2
Underexposed	0	4	4
Use of flash	1	9	10
Close up	0	0	0
Medium shot	6	9	15
Long shot	1	12	13
Portrait	0	3	3
Landscape	7	19	26
Eye-level	6	19	25
Low angle	1	0	1
High angle	0	3	3
Tilted	0	0	0

APPENDIX B - PHOTOGRAPHS NOT SHOWN IN THE THESIS TEXT

B1 – GIANNIS PHOTOS



Photo no. 8: karate games scene



Photo no. 9: karate games scene



Photo no. 10: karate games scene

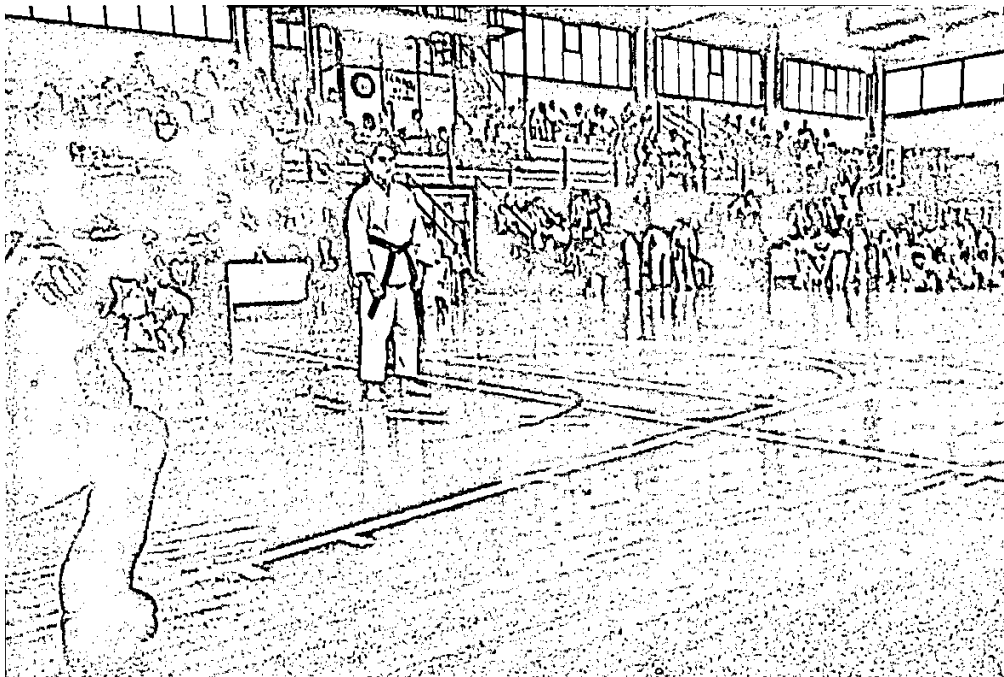


Photo no. 19: karate games scene

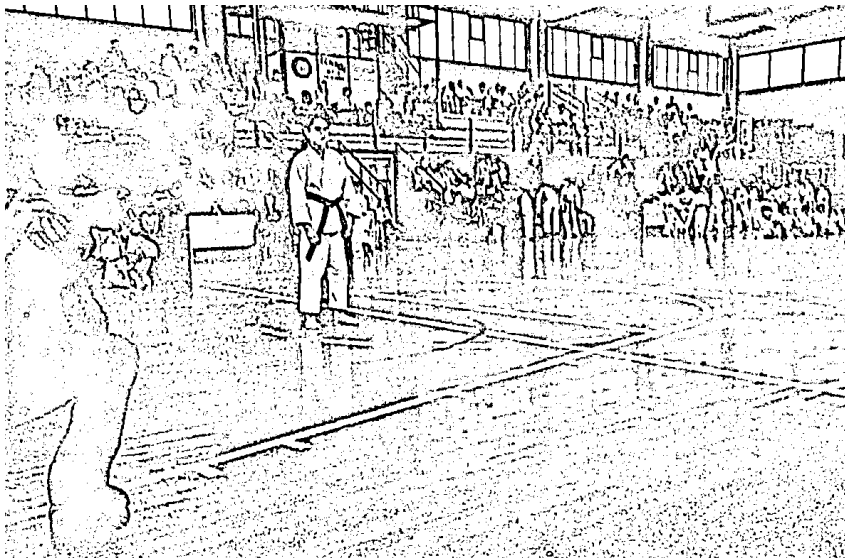


Photo no. 20: karate games scene



Photo no. 21: karate games scene



Photo no. 30: Giannis' friend inside the bus



Photo no. 35: Giannis' bicycle



Photo no. 1: Red car outside Giannis' home



Photo no. 4: Silver car outside Giannis' home



Photo no. 2: inside classroom



Photo no. 6: inside classroom



Photo no. 33: Giannis posing

B2 - RENALNTO PHOTOS



Photo no. 82: Renalnto playing football



Photo no. 85: Renalnto playing football



Photo no. 92: Renalnto's younger brother



Photo no. 94: Renalnto's younger brothers



Photo no. 96: Renalnto's younger brother



Photo no. 97: Renalnto's younger brother

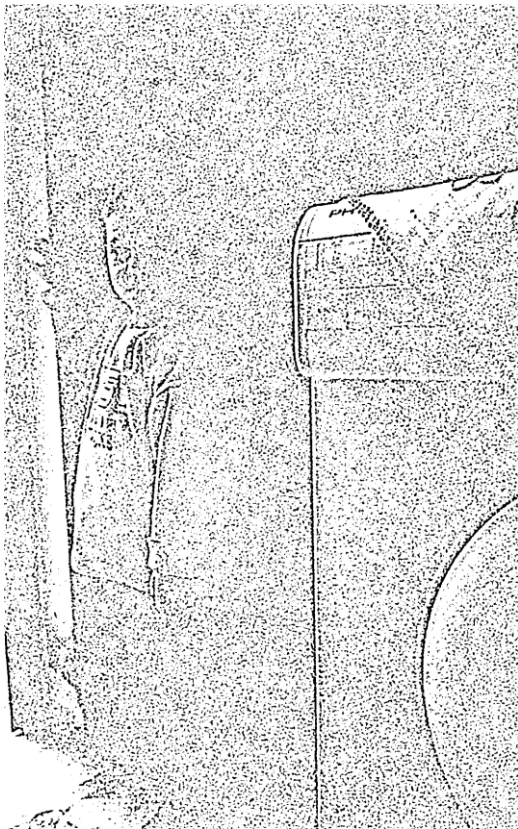


Photo no. 99: Renalnto's younger brother



Photo no. 108: Nature



Photo no. 120: Nature



Photo no. 122: Nature



Photo no. 124: Nature



Photo no. 116: Renalnto's neighbourhood



Picture no. 123 Renalnto's neighbourhood



Photo no. 121: Renalnto's neighbourhood

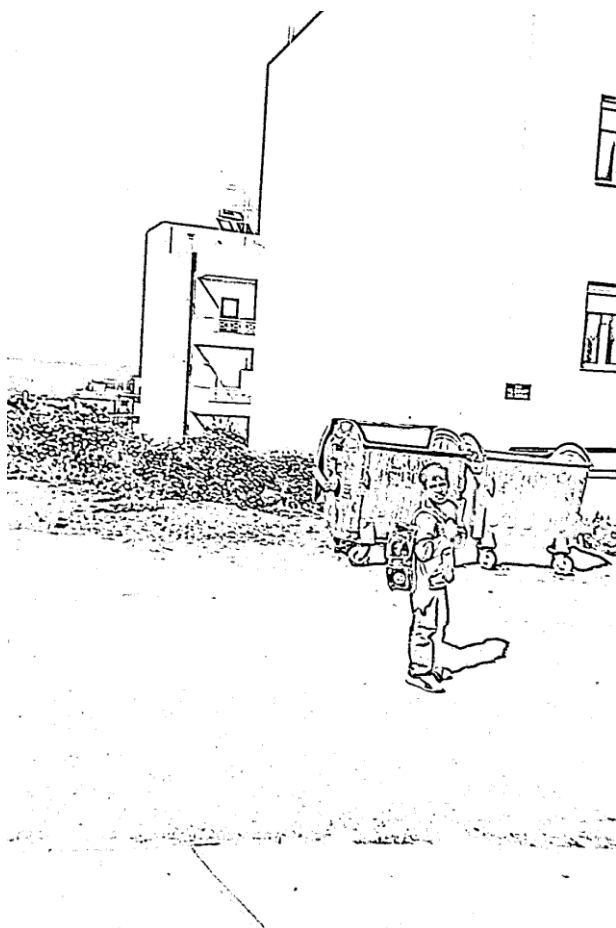


Photo no. 128: Renalnto's neighbourhood



Photo no. 127: Renalnto's neighbourhood

B3 – MYRTO PHOTOS

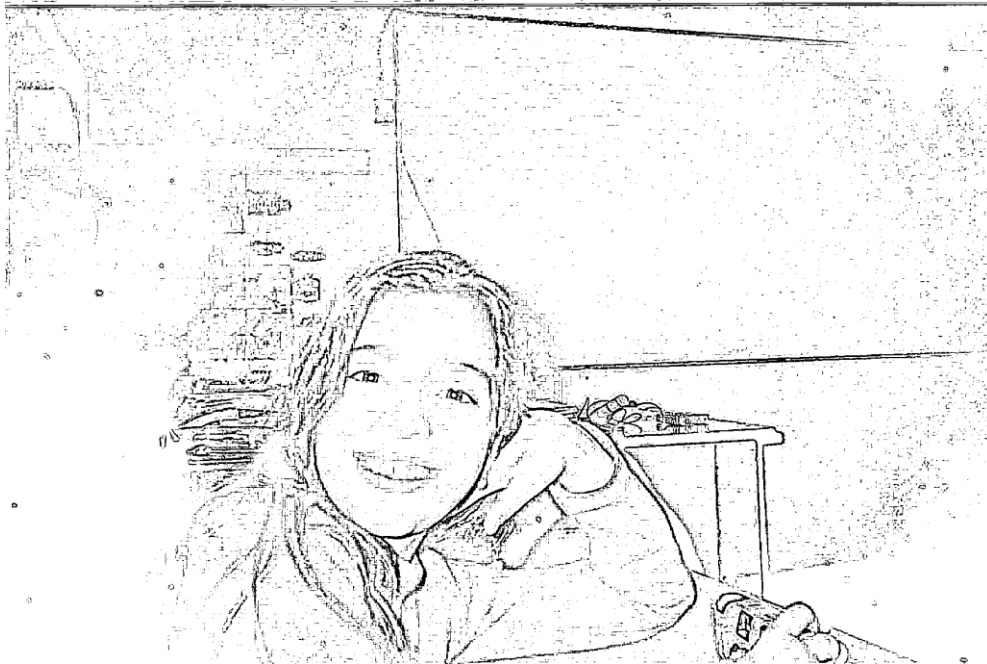


Photo no. 39: Myrto's friend Giorgia



Photo no. 41: Myrto's friends Anna and Aris

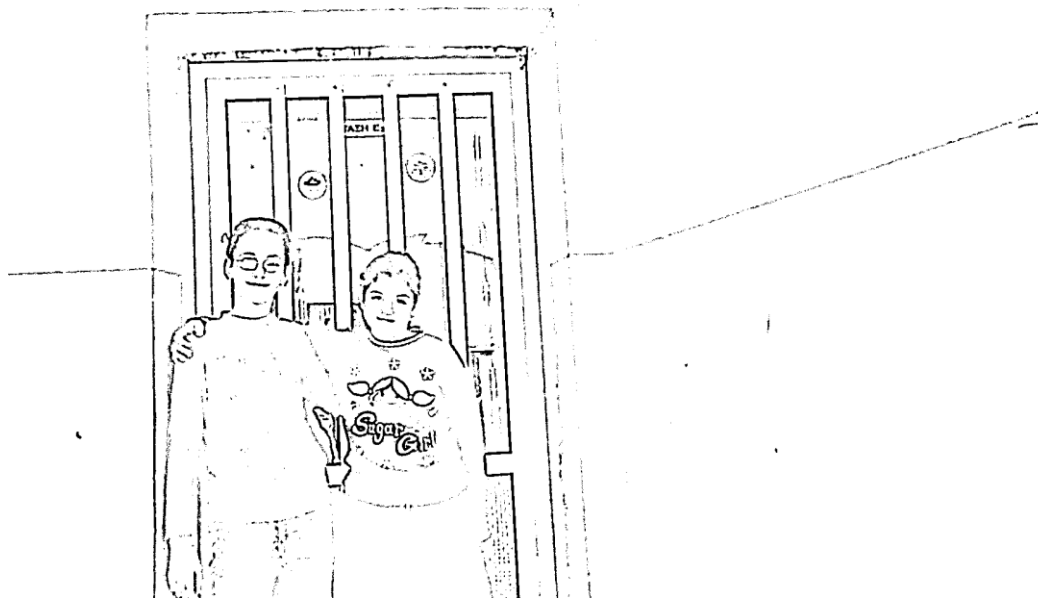


Photo no. 44: Schoolmates posing

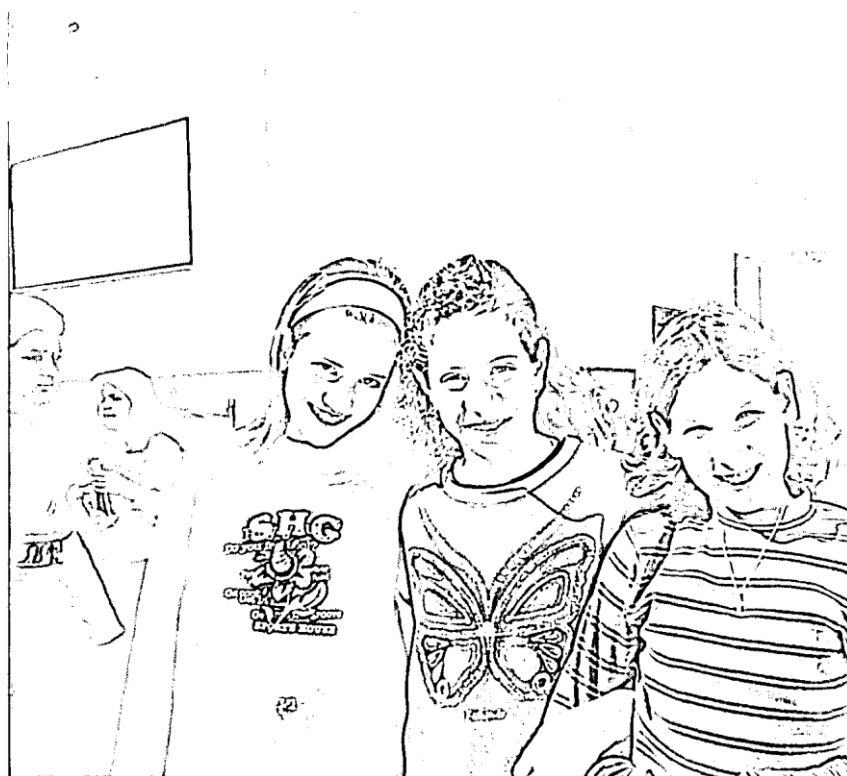


Photo no. 46: Schoolmates posing



Photo no. 51: Myrto's mum and sister



Photo 57: Myrto's house exterior

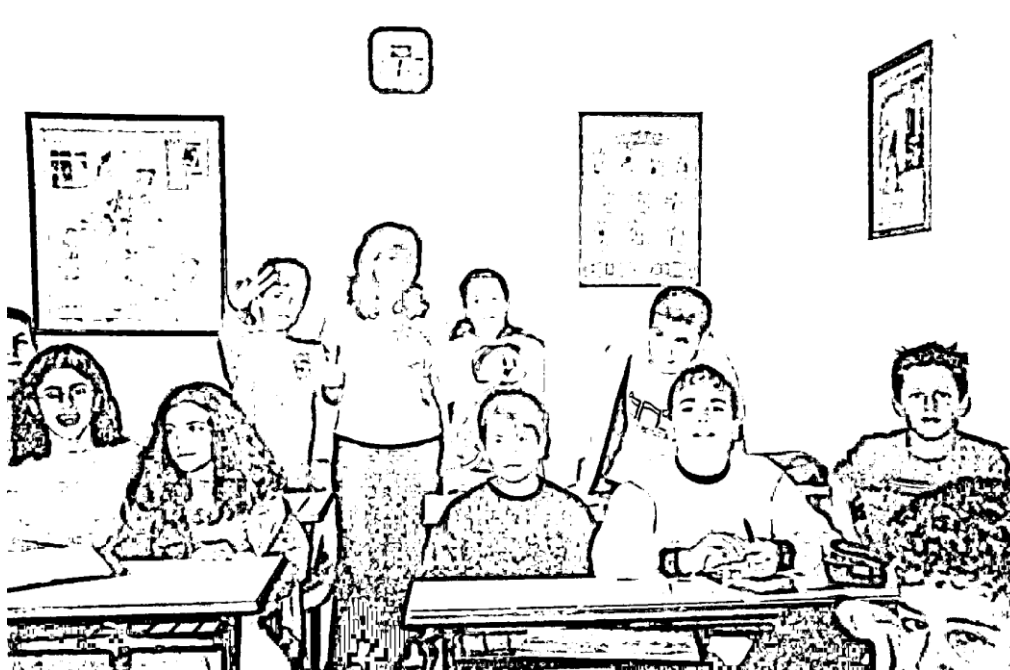


Photo 59: English lesson at school



Photo 62: Myrto's teddy bear and bunny rabbit soft toys

ARIS



Photo no. 187: Aris' home

B4: NON-PARTICIPANTS' PHOTOS

ANNA



Photo no. 119: Anna's house

GEORGIA



Figure 5.22



Figure 5.23

SOTIRIS

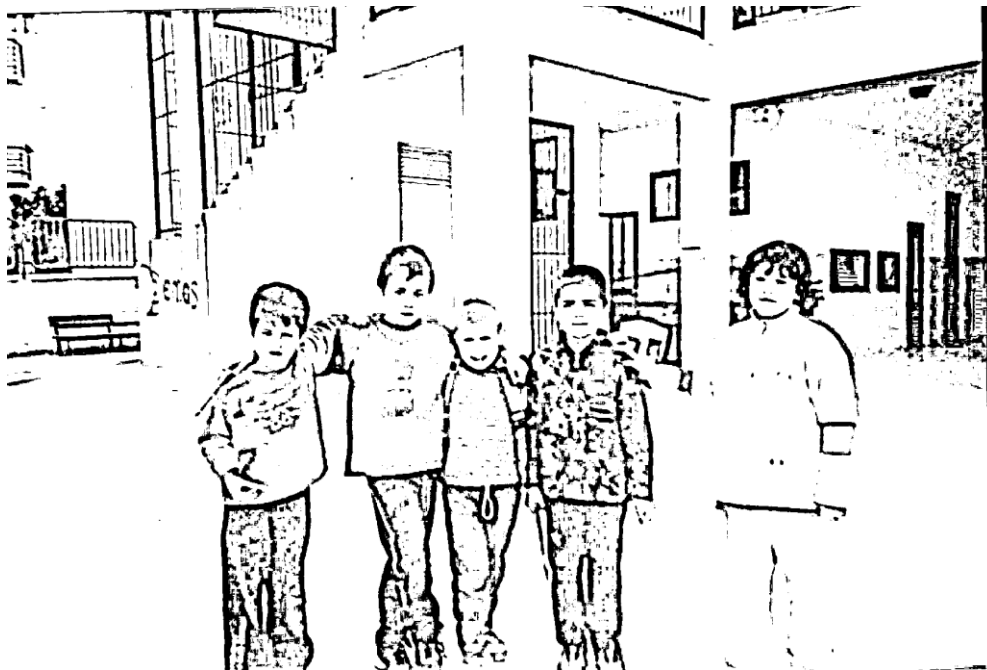
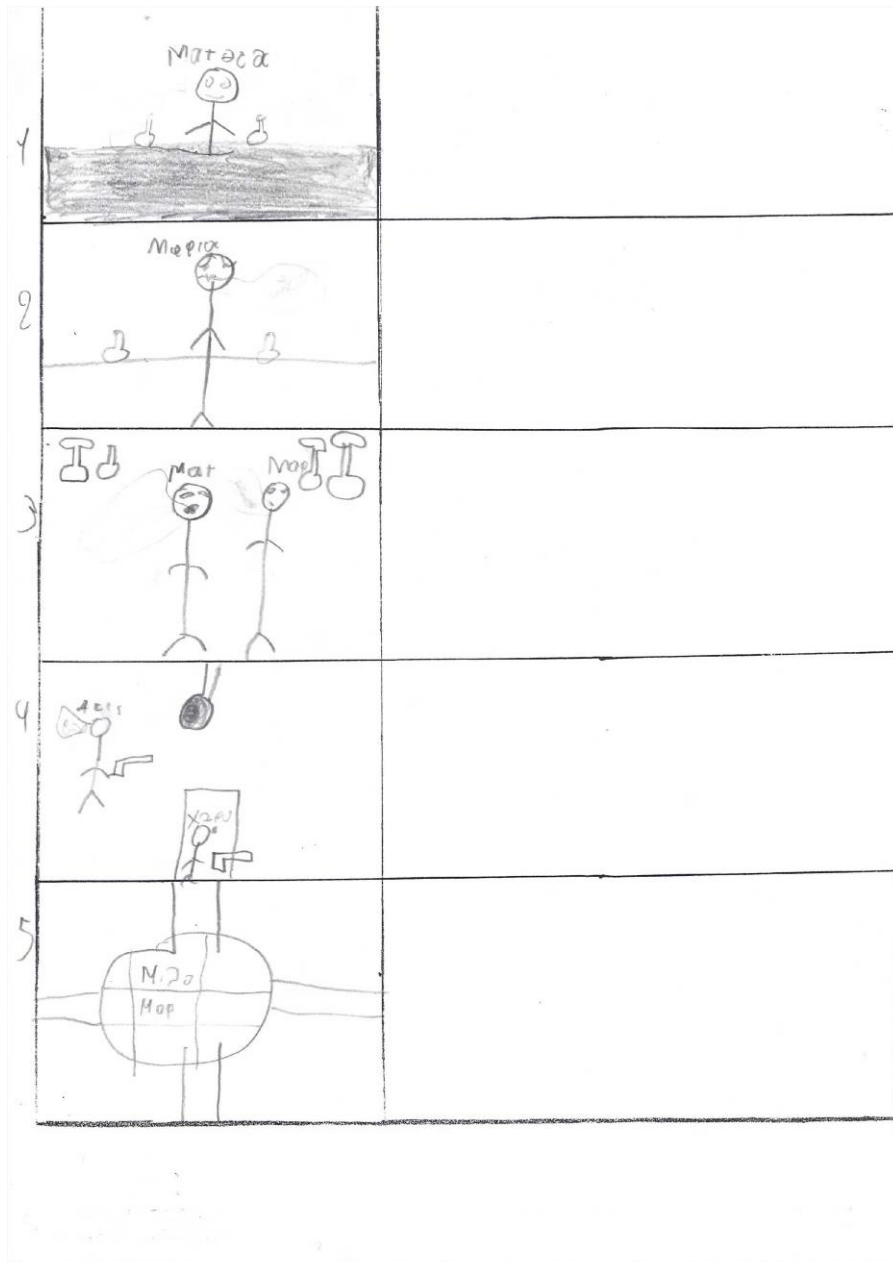


Photo no. 282: schoolmates posing

APPENDIX C - STORYBOARDS



Storyboard 1 - Stella

1		ΠΡΩΤΑ κάνουμε κορείο στο πύλο μπαρ.
2		Μετά κάνουμε περην το μπαρ και να διζουμε τις barwoman.
3	 ΜΥΛΟ ΜΠΑΡ	Μπαίνει ο πρώτος πελάτης δηλαδή ο Βαγγέλης. Τότε κάνουμε ένα πεσαίο.
4	 Διζουμε	κάνουμε πεσαίο για να διζουμε κάθεται στο μπαρ και πίνει ένα ένα τσάι whisky
5		Ο Βαγγέλης τότε παίζει κάτω, κάνουμε πακινό όχι δονικό, πακινό.

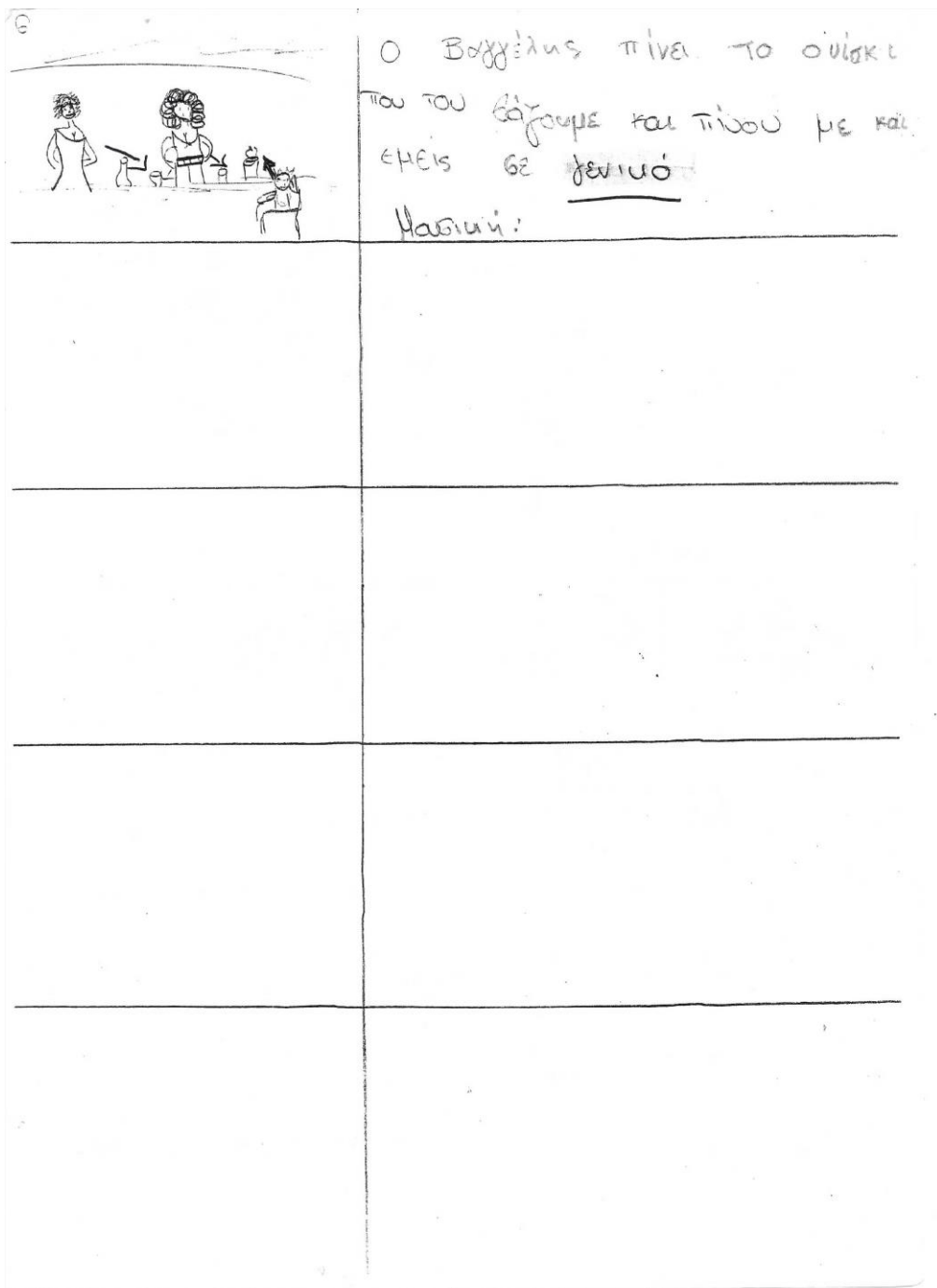
Storyboard 2A - Aris

6		Τ'ότ'ε μπαίνω ερώ και γουν* κάνουν μεσαίο. και ζητάω πεζο
7		Η Μαρία φεύγει κάνουμε κοντινό για να δείξουμε ότι της πέφτουν τα κλειδιά
8		
9		
10		

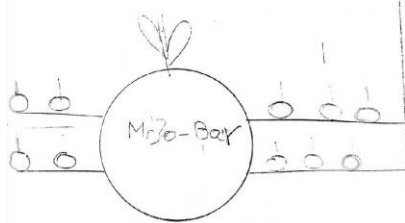
Storyboard 2B - Aris



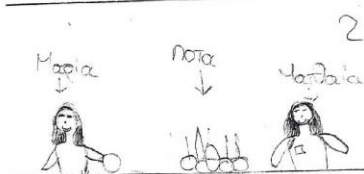
Storyboard 3A - Myrto



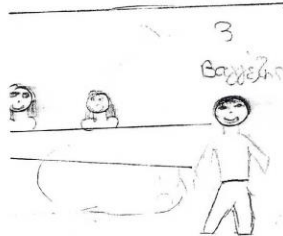
Storyboard 3B - Myrto



Κοντινό στο Milo-Bar και εκείνη
τη στιγμή βέει μια φωνή Milo-Bar.



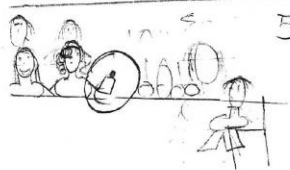
Μόλις η Maria και η Martha
που καθαρίζουν το Bar.



Μαγειρεύει στο Boysen που φαίνεται
από την πόρτα και πίνει από
τα κοπιτότα.

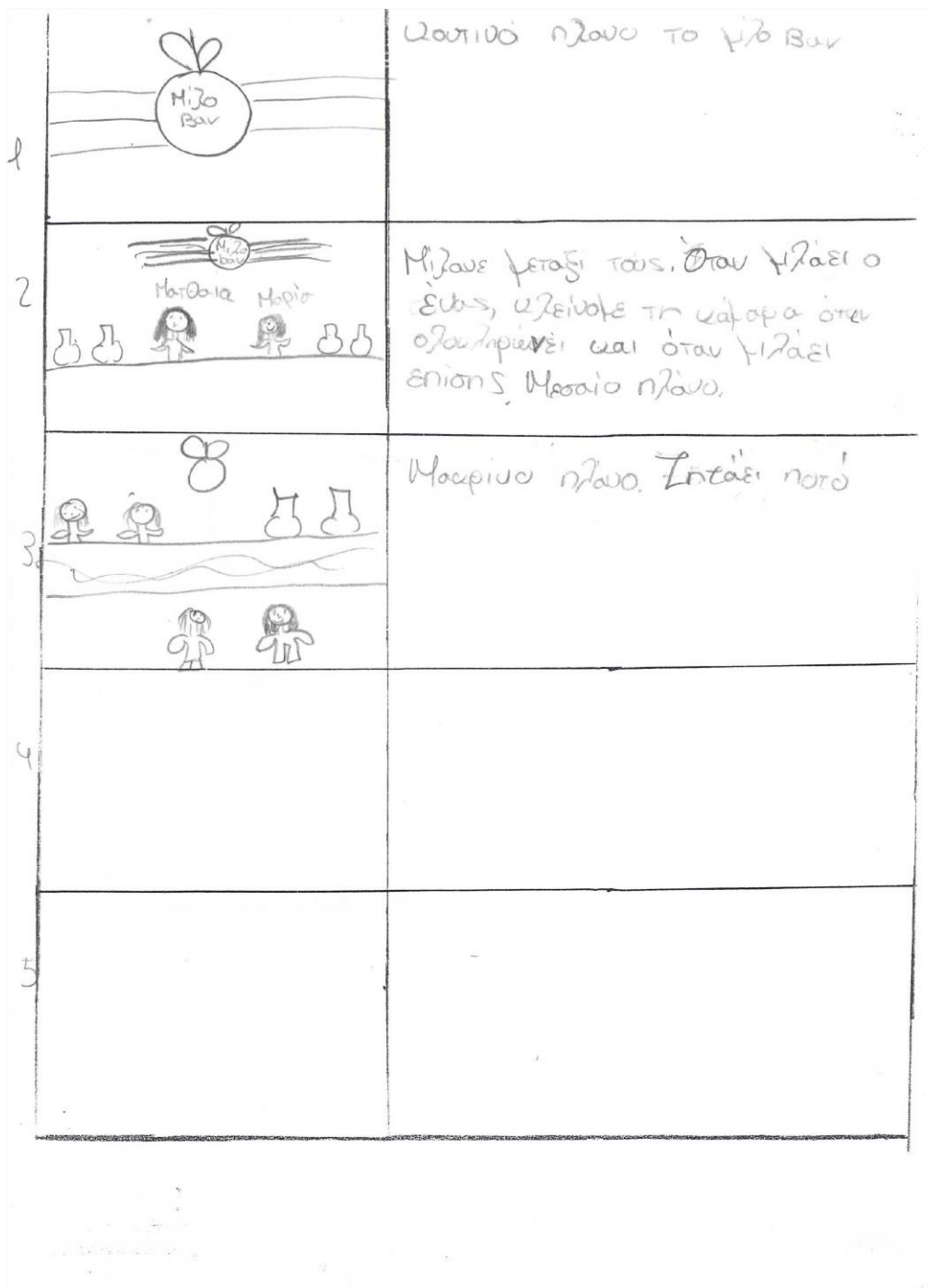


Ο Boysen καθαρίζει και πίνει
από το αποκοτό από φασόλι
αποκοτό και γίνεται ένα ούζο.

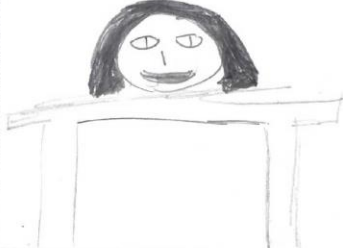


Το κοπιτότα βάζει στο Boysen
το ούζο και κάνει ούζο
αποκοτό.

Storyboard 4 - Anna



Storyboard 5 – Renalnto

2	Μαρία Νασαράν Μαρία Χα 	1) Μαρία και Ματθαία 2) Γενιού 3) Μιλάμε
1		1) ΜΗΝΟ-BAR 2) Μαυρινό
3		1) Βαγγέλης 2) Κοντινό 3) Ζητάει ποτό
4		1) Σοφία 2) Κοντινό 3) Ζητάει ποτό
5		1) Μαρία 2) Γενιού 3) Χορεύει «Τσιφτετέλι»

Storyboard 6 - Giannis