

## Self-Regulated Learning and New Literacies: an experience at the University of Barcelona

---

CILIA WILLEM,<sup>1</sup> MARTÍN AIELLO & ANTONIO BARTOLOMÉ

### Introduction

The use of ICT in higher education is currently facing a new challenge. It is not only the introduction of online activities or technology-enhanced learning, but also the guarantee that these and other educational actions promote critical thinking skills in the learner. The need for *new literacies* is emerging from this context (Castells, 1996).

This article presents the findings of an evaluation of a post-graduate media studies course in which students analysed and produced audiovisual messages around the topic of racism and xenophobia. The project, eCLIPse (*Digital Video Clips for a Social Europe*), was carried out simultaneously by students from four European universities and took place from February 2004 to March 2005.<sup>2</sup> The study focused exclusively on the students from the University of Barcelona who were enrolled in Audiovisual Communication studies. The project was embedded in a course on digital video. Therefore, digital technologies were actively used in the project and were central to it. For the study, the main question we asked was if participants' *critical thinking towards the media* ('Media Literacy') was promoted through the acquisition of SRL skills in a TELE. This question can be subdivided into the following ones:

1. Which SRL strategies were used in the experience? (SRL)
2. Which digital technologies were involved in the learning environment? (TELE)
3. How have these strategies and technologies contributed to the students becoming media literate? (Media Literacy)

SRL through TELE => media literacy?

In the first part of the article, we will analyse the theoretical background of the concepts used, and in the second part, we will present the results of the study. This experience illustrates the challenge of educating with digital technology to promote certain aspects of SRL and to enhance critical thinking in relation to media.

## Higher Education: new realities and paradigm shifts

### *New Realities*

Innovation in the educational and professional development of students and teachers in higher education, especially at the University, started to play an important role in the second half of the 1990s and it was consolidated as a strategic academic field during the first years of the 21st Century. This coincided with the introduction of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the education process and the increasing use of the Internet as a new medium.

The shift towards *student-centred learning* (Harvey & Knight, 1996), an approach in which the teacher's role is that of a skilled learning 'facilitator' rather than of an 'expert', has had profound consequences for curriculum change in primary, secondary and higher education. At the same time, it has increased the need to promote *general critical competences* amongst university students, who, after all, are citizens of the information, communication and knowledge society. These general, 'overarching' competences can be approached from two different perspectives that are relevant for this article: *self-regulation* and *new literacies*.

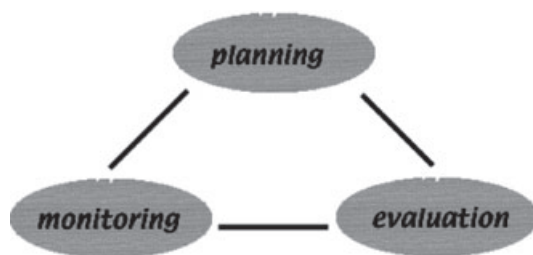
### The SRL Model

SRL is understood as *a set of competences that allows students to control the variables that have an impact on their learning process*. These variables can be cognitive, motivational-emotional and social (Zimmerman, 1990; 1998). SRL is situated in a context where students not only monitor their *cognitive* progress (acquisition of knowledge), but also take strategic decisions and manage emotional factors such as stress and anxiety in their learning process (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1998). These competences can be described as *meta-cognition*: acquisition of knowledge about one's own learning process (Hacker, 1998).

The SRL process can be divided into three phases: *planning, monitoring* and *evaluation*.<sup>3</sup>

- The *planning-analysis* phase implies that students design their learning scenario(s): define and clarify learning objectives, analyse the tasks, plan strategies to achieve the objectives (including the alternative strategies).
- During the *reflection-monitoring* phase, students check if their learning process is progressing towards the set aims, if they are using the appropriate strategy or if they have fallen back into old learning habits, if this strategy works, or if a different one should be used.
- During the *evaluation-application* phase, students analyse whether the chosen strategy has worked, what they think about it and how they feel, if it is appropriate for that kind of learning task, how they can apply it in the future, etc . . .

These three phases form a ‘virtuous circle’ of continuous progress:



*Model 1: ‘Virtuous Circle’ of SRL*

Each of the three phases must have a *reflection* dimension, which links the cognitive and the meta-cognitive aspects of the tasks being carried out in the learning process. We considered these aspects when designing TELEs for our learners.

## **New Literacies**

### *What is Literacy?*

Literacy is not a simple concept with a single, accepted meaning. There are no universal definitions or standards of literacy. We can, however, define the concept according to different contexts. Traditionally, being literate has been defined as being able *to read and write*. The UNESCO threshold standard for literacy is the ability to *read, write and comprehend a simple statement about one’s daily life in any language*.<sup>4</sup> This definition, however, is very oriented towards a number of specific competences related to language in the so-called ‘developing countries’, as literacy here becomes a condition for development.

But what is the essence of literacy? What does it mean for each individual, regardless of their cultural, historical and social context? When looking at the concept of literacy, we could approach it from the *competence level* perspective and the (*dominant*) *medium* perspective.

### *Competence Level*

OECD defines literacy as: ‘The ability to understand and employ printed information in daily activities, at home, at work and in the community — to achieve one’s goals, and to develop one’s knowledge and potential.’<sup>5</sup> Compared to the ‘read and write’ concept, this is a much wider definition, as it takes into account the *level* at which one should master literacy competences so as to function in one’s community.

‘Functional literacy’ is thus defined by the competences that need to be mastered to function in a particular society (Williams & Snipper, 1990). In the same sense, it is the ability to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning in a community and to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for the community’s development.<sup>6</sup> More than the acquisition of reading and writing skills, it is also a *social practice*. In Gramsci’s view, literacy is both a concept and a social practice that must be linked historically to configurations of knowledge and power, on the one hand, and to the political and cultural struggle over language and experience on the other.<sup>7</sup>

Building on Paulo Freire's work, we can talk about 'liberatory' literacy, where people are literate when they have become *politicised* (Freire, 1987). Politicised people, according to Freire, are able to *manipulate* language (speaking, reading, writing, etc.) so as to comprehend their own self-identity in the context in which they function. For Freire, literacy is not approached primarily as a technical skill to be acquired, but as a necessary foundation for 'cultural action for freedom' (Freire, 1988).

Yet another view is that of 'critical literacy': the *ability to recognize the social essence of literacy and to understand its fundamentally political nature* (Williams & Snipper, 1990).

We could summarise these *levels* of literacy in the following table:

TABLE I. Five levels of literacy

<b>Illiteracy</b>	No literacy skills
<b>Basic literacy</b>	Ability of a person to read at a low level, sign her/his name, list items
<b>Literacy</b>	Ability of a person to both read and write simple sentences about their daily life
<b>Functional Literacy</b>	Ability of a person to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning in her/his community
<b>Liberatory Literacy/Critical Literacy</b>	Ability of a person to manipulate language so as to comprehend self-identity and the fundamentally political nature of literacy.

Adapted from the Jamaican Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture

### *The Dominant Medium*

We have looked at literacy from the *competence level*, but our question about the essence of literacy is still unanswered: what about highly technologised societies where 99% of the population can read and write simple statements about their lives? They are 'literate' according to the standard definition, but are all 99% able to engage in those activities in which literacy is required for effective and successful functioning in their community?

Hence, another perspective refers to the *medium* itself: literacy in what? *Which* competences need to be mastered in order to be literate? The key question here is what is the *dominant medium* in a certain social, historical and/or cultural context? After centuries of hegemony of the *word*, visual messages are starting to have a similar status in society and in education. In Western society, the printed word was the dominant medium for a very long time, and it still is. But, although knowing how to read and write is still essential, it is no longer *sufficient* in a world where the image and audiovisual media — be it television, cinema, information technologies or the Internet — are increasingly becoming dominant (Goodman, 2003).

In the context of education, the intensive use of digital media and the massification of the Internet as THE information and communication network are beginning to affect the very concept of 'text'. Today's learners need to cope with a complex mix of visual, oral, and interactive media as well as traditional text. People of lesser education or older people may see themselves falling behind as the informational gap between them and those who are literate in the new media and technologies widens.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, the definition of literacy also depends on the historical, social and cultural context in which the individual is living and learning: we talk about numeracy, visual literacy, musical literacy, health literacy, family literacy, environmental literacy and information literacy. In a technological society, the concept is expanding to include the media and electronic text, in addition to alphabet and number systems. It becomes clear that modern society learners, both in formal and non-formal contexts, must become *digitally* and *media* literate in order to tackle new problems.

Literacy, and especially ‘liberatory’ or ‘critical’ literacy (see Table I), in this wider view, can serve to *empower* people through a combination of pedagogical skills and critical analysis and also function as a vehicle to examine how cultural definitions of gender, race, class, and subjectivity are constituted as both historical and social constructs.<sup>10</sup>

*Old, New and Future Literacies*

After having examined the two main aspects of literacy — the competence level and the dominant medium — we can summarise its most important dimensions in the following table:

TABLE II. Dimensions of literacy: competence levels, the dominant medium and socio-historical context

c o m p e t e n c e  l e v e l	COMPETENCES	h i s t o r i c a l  c o n t e x t	MEDIUM
	↓		Illiteracy: no literacy skills Literacy: sign name, list items Basic literacy: comprehend, read and write simple sentences Functional literacy: ability to function in a complex society 'Liberatory' literacy (Freire) 'Critical' literacy (Williams&Snipper) → 'politicized' (Freire) → 'social practice' (Gramsci) → 'active community engagement' (Goodman)
	'TIMELESS', REGARDLESS OF SOCIAL CONTEXT		TIME/SOCIETY/CULTURE DEPENDENT (historical, social and cultural context)
EMPOWERMENT			
Empowerment for the individual in a certain time/society/culture takes place when a person becomes <i>functionally literate</i> (highest competence level) in the <i>dominant medium</i> of that time/context.			

## Digital Literacy and Media Literacy

If we look at the ‘dominant medium’ dimension of literacy and we take our contemporary, Western, technologised society as a case, it is clear that the ability to read and write — the classical concept of literacy — is *not* sufficient to fully function in a community. In a *technologised* society, literacy will be about reading and writing (with) *technology*. Thus, we will have to examine *new literacies* and eventually *future literacies* (see Table II). In our study, we focused on ‘digital literacy’ and ‘media literacy’ in an audiovisual communication class at the University of Barcelona. So, how can we define digital and media literacy?<sup>11</sup>

*Digital literacy* refers to the acquisition of skills and competences related to new digital technologies which, in a technological society, play a fundamental role in education, work, leisure, and ultimately in active citizenship. Active participation as a citizen increasingly depends on the level of digital literacy skills, as new technology is considered to be an instrument to achieve more efficacy in the access, use, distribution and processing of information.

*Media literacy*, on the other hand, refers to a higher concept level: it is oriented towards the different aspects that emerge from the impregnating influence of images and information, enhanced by new technologies that have given the media — traditional and new media, like the Internet — an impressive power to fascinate. In the context of media literacy, information is analysed and evaluated in terms of *varicity* and *deceit*, of confusion between facts and fiction, and from a precise point of view, as opposed to bias and prejudice. It is, therefore, a wider concept, beyond digital literacy competences.

Thus, whereas the concept of *digital literacy* implies the mastering of new (digital) tools, *media literacy* puts the emphasis on the sensible and responsible use of these tools, as they become more and more available through new channels of communication (‘media’). ‘Media’ is understood here as a means of mass communication.<sup>12</sup> In this sense, we could define Media Literacy as the ‘development of competences that allow people to be critical thinkers and creative producers of messages that are increasingly diverse, using image, word and sound’. The Center for Media Literacy<sup>13</sup> proposes a wider definition, responding to the new situation of media culture of the 21st Century. It suggests the importance of education in this process, as it not only refers to the fact of being literate, but also to the set of actions that leads towards literacy:

Media Literacy is a 21st Century approach to education. It provides a framework to access, analyze, evaluate and create messages in a variety of forms (. . .). Media Literacy builds an understanding of the role of media in society as well as essential skills of inquiry and self-expression necessary for citizens of a democracy (CML, p. 8).

The concept of media literacy is characterised by four aspects or phases:

- *Access*: the access to and distribution of media — old and new — both from the audience and the production point of view.
- *Awareness/analysis*: the ability to analyse messages for both form and content,
- *Evaluation*: the ability to detect contradictions, discover intentions, unmask ideology behind the message.
- *Creation/production*: the ability to produce and distribute audiovisual messages, with an awareness of all aspects that are related to them.<sup>14</sup>

## Critical Thinking and Media Literacy

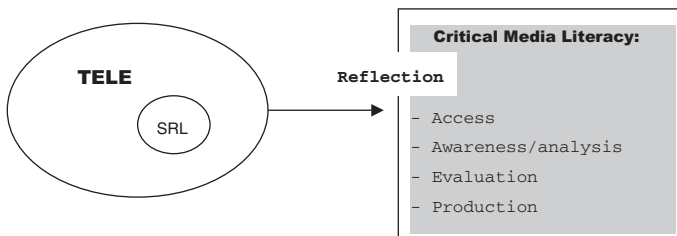
In educational terms, the process of analysing and producing audiovisual messages from the perspective of media literacy implies a new way of learning. Here, a reflexive process takes place, similar to SRL, where the key point is to achieve some *high-level critical thinking skills*. So how exactly do we define these skills? Several kinds of cognitive and metacognitive competences or skills have been proposed that are related to critical thinking. We could summarise them in three categories (Piette, 2003):

- The ability to *analyse* information: formulate questions, define concepts, distinguish the elements of an argument, identify problems and clarify alternative solutions.
- The ability to *judge the reliability* of the information: judge the credibility of a source, identify implicit bias, judge the logical validity of an argument.
- The ability to *evaluate* information: draw appropriate conclusions, make generalisations, infer meaning, formulate hypotheses, and reformulate an argument, a problem or a situation.

Adult educators can teach critical media literacy by giving learners the tools to critique frames of reference, ideas, information, and patterns of privilege and develop critical consciousness (Freire & Macedo, 1987). The question here is: what kind of tools, in what kind of setting?

## SRL and New Literacies

What is the link between SRL and New Literacies? If we look at the need for new kinds of literacy that our modern society faces, we see that technological, digital and media literacy are the most urgent ones to address. So, on the one hand, *digital technology* and *digital media* are creating new possibilities for facilitating self-regulating mechanisms, as they allow for the development of autonomous, non face-to-face TELEs. On the other, the level of *reflection* is an important feature of both SRL and literacy: literacy at its highest levels (functional, liberatory and critical literacy) necessarily implies mechanisms of self-reflection and self-analysis, similar to the meta-cognitive process in self-regulation. Now it becomes clear that the focus of this study is precisely on how SRL strategies and TELEs can foster high competence levels in media literacy, both from the perspective of *technology* and *reflection*:



*Model 2: How SRL strategies in TELEs can foster high competence levels in Media Literacy*

### **The Challenge: adapting practices to the changing paradigms**

How can we promote Media Literacy skills in higher education students? What is the role of TELEs and SRL in this context?

### **The Case: eCLIPse project at UB**

The eCLIPse project,<sup>15</sup> which took place from February 2004 to March 2005, focused on media, race and the question of representation. At the UB, students analysed the *portrayal of ethnic minorities and immigrants* in the Spanish and Catalan media over several months.

Why this particular topic? The representation of minority groups as constructed by the media plays a very important role, not only in the perception of the public, but also in the very perception they have of themselves, their self-esteem and their aspirations (Shepherd, 2003). Most importantly, the imagery of television news may contribute to racism and discrimination through the promotion of various stereotypes (Campbell, 1995).

Both positive and negative media representations may reflect ideology and attempts to encode meanings for audience members (McQuail, 2000). The question is: what are these meanings and who are the audiences? It would be silly in media education to pretend that 'ideology' did not exist or that it did not influence the media. It could, perhaps, be criminal. Ignoring ideology is no better than pushing a single ideology. The only tenable stance is one that helps students *identify ideological influences in their media*, clarify their own ideological beliefs, and come to terms with the way that ideologies operate within the media (Worsnop, 2003). It is only by asking these questions that we can foster the highest competence levels of functional and critical literacy in media messages.

With this in mind, it was crucial for our study to closely examine the following elements: the *settings of the TELE*, the *meta-cognitive aspects*, *students' digital literacy competences*, and *students' media literacy competences*.

### **Settings of the TELE**

The environment was basically a 'blended' one:<sup>16</sup>

- *Face-to-face sessions* and *Virtual Campus*: the technical classes for the acquisition of digital video skills and the workshops for the analysis of media messages were face-to-face sessions. At the same time, discussions about the selected clips and the topic in general continued in the Virtual Campus: forum, chat and e-mail. These tools were also used for a continuous evaluation, monitoring and assessment of the students. Both on- and offline tools were used in a complementary ('blended') manner.
- *Analogue* and *digital media*: both kinds of technologies were used in this project. On the one hand students had to record news items from their television, using analogue VHS technology. On the other, the selected fragments were digitalised and presented on DVD. Other digital technologies were also used, e.g. editing and compression software, communication technology and digital video.
- *Teacher-regulated learning* and *Self-regulated learning*: the teacher-regulated learning took place as classes, specific assignments and monitoring, but



students also had the course website for further practice, with guidelines and summaries, resources and suggestions.

### **Meta-cognition**

In the eCLIPse model, the meta-cognitive aspects lie in the fact that students not only analysed and evaluated media, but also had to *think about* their analysis, write down their reflections, and share their experiences and insights with students from the other Universities at the Media Forum. This international conference, held in Barcelona in May 2004, allowed them (or forced them) to compare their work with the other students and think about the similarities and differences. Thus, during the Media Forum, two essential aspects of media literacy came together: the *cognitive processes* (learning about media) and *meta-cognitive processes* (learning about learning).

It became clear that each of the steps in the process of learning about media had to be controlled or 'validated' by meta-cognitive mechanisms that allowed for reflection (*See Model 1: 'Virtuous Circle' of SRL*). This SRL cycle, applied to media studies in the context of an ongoing ('lifelong') learning process, can be best summarised as in Table III below.

### **Digital Literacy**

As we have seen before, digital literacy is understood here as the acquisition of skills and competences related to new digital technologies. In the eCLIPse project, students were familiarised with digital video and its related technology: non-linear editing software, media compression software and web application software. These skills were necessary if they wanted to participate in this project, as all videos had to be available online (website) and off-line (DVD) after the project ended.<sup>17</sup>

Obviously, students had to use e-mail, the communication tools of the Virtual Campus, and Internet search engines for their information and research.

### **Media Literacy**

Students' work centred around the following questions throughout the project:

1. How do we judge the relationship between the representation that the media offer of people, places and events, and their existence in the 'real world'?
2. Who is included in the representations of the media?
3. Who is not included?
4. Why? What/who is behind the message?

In summary, we could say that the TELE, as it was set at the UB, aimed to foster the following media literacy competences:

The different categories represent the skills and competences ideally acquired by students in their self-regulated and critical thinking of the media.

TABLE III. The SRL cycle applied to media literacy: possible cognitive and meta-cognitive media literacy competences

SRL →	<b>Planning and Analysis</b> of acquired knowledge	<b>Monitoring and Reflection</b> on acquired knowledge	<b>Evaluation and Application</b> of acquired knowledge
Media Literacy ↓			
<b>ACCESS</b> to media	How can I best approach the question of accessibility of mass media? ----- What have I learned about the accessibility, structure and distribution of media?	Did my approach to the question of accessibility of mass media work? ----- What kind of access do I have to the media and what kind of access do other people have?	Start to become aware of the access to and the distribution of media.
<b>AWARENESS/ ANALYSIS</b> of media messages	What will I have to find out about media that I have not thought of before? What kind of skills will I need to <i>analyse</i> media messages? ----- Which skills have I acquired to analyse media messages?	Did I make the right choices about the skills needed to analyse media messages? ----- Was I aware of the stereotypes transmitted by media messages? How have I learned to analyse media messages, and what implications does this have?	Start to think critically about media. Use the acquired analysis skills to analyse media messages.
<b>EVALUATION</b> of media messages	What kind of skills will I need to <i>evaluate</i> media messages? ----- Which skills have I acquired to think critically about media messages? How can I put media messages into a wider context?	Did I make the right choices about the skills needed to evaluate media messages? ----- How have I learned to think critically about media? How have I learned to evaluate media messages, and what implications does this have?	Use these critical thinking skills in other contexts in the future.
<b>PRODUCTION</b> of media messages	Which skills do I already have and which skills do I need to acquire for producing media? Which <i>specific or technical</i> competences? Which <i>transversal</i> competences?	Were the skills I already had useful for producing media? What new skills have I acquired? ----- Have I applied these specific and transversal competences to the creation process?	Create and produce media messages that do not perpetuate stereotypes, but rather contribute to transformation of society. <i>(Critical Media Literacy)</i>

## Evaluating the Learning Process

### Method

Following the first phase of the eCLIPSe project, the students were asked to reflect on their own learning process during the project. Of particular interest was the question of how new technologies enhanced SRL and new literacies. The strategy used to collect the information was the *semi-structured in-depth interview* which focused on obtaining answers to the following questions:

- Which technologies did students use in the project?
- Which SRL strategies did students use in the project?

We analysed seven interviews at the end of the first phase of the project. All students were between 20 and 25 years of age, four were women and three were men.

The questions we asked were:

- What kind of technologies did you use in your learning process?
- How did these technologies help you to analyse media messages?
- What do you feel you have learned?
- If you had to start this project again, what would you change/improve about your own learning process?
- Do you think you will use the acquired knowledge in the future/ in a different context?

We used thematic analysis for each topic. We also quoted some interesting statements related to our research question. Some are interesting because they are common to most of the students, others precisely because they are not.

### Results

- What kinds of technology did you use in the project?

As shown in Fig. 1, most students mentioned the *course website*. Although they did not explicitly say so, they saw the website *media literacy* — part of the TELE — as a separate tool in their learning process. One student stated: ‘Perhaps the website was one of the most important communication technologies that we used, because the people who could not go to the classes, could reach the information by connecting to the course website.’

Television and VHS were mentioned by only a small number of students. This might seem obvious, as we do not consider them as ‘technology’, but the fact is that analogue TV and video are some of the fundamental technologies used in the project, as students had to record television news items. It seems that 20–25-year-old students (born between 1980 and 1985) understand ‘technology’ by default as ‘digital technology’ (what older people would call ‘new technology’). ‘New’ technologies have always been part of their lives. One student mentioned the mobile phone as a technology used in the project, as it was a communication tool for their small group meetings.

- In what way did technology help you for the analysis of media messages?

Interestingly, as shown in Fig. 2, two students mentioned the advantages of digital video for the analysis of media messages, pointing out that it was a lot easier and quicker to browse through them:

Question	1:	Number of students who mention item (n=7)
What kinds of technology have you used in the project?		
Digital video		5
Television		3
VHS		3
Mobile phone		1
Virtual forum		6
Email		5
Internet		4
Course website		5

FIGURE 1. Technologies used in the project, as reported by students

Question	2:	Number of students who mention item (n=7)
In what way did technology help you for the analysis of media messages?		
Practical advantages of digital video (non-linear, flexible)		2
Speed		3
Course website: useful for reference		5
Internet: for additional information		0
TV and VHS		0

FIGURE 2. Students' view on how these technologies helped them in the process of analysing media messages

'I think that digital technology can help us to analyse media, as you can move through the material faster and frame by frame.'

and

'It helped us to be quicker in our analysis.'

For example, when using non-linear browsing it is easier to detect intentional editing strategies.

— What have you learnt?

As becomes clear from Fig. 3, all students claim to have learnt (something) about the representation of immigrants and ethnic minorities. We could say that they reached at least the second phase of Media Literacy: the awareness/analysis phase, if not the evaluation phase (see 'Digital Literacy and Media Literacy'). One student was quite sure about her role as a *producer* of media in this sense:

Question 3: What have you learnt?	Number of students who mention item (n=7)
The question of representation of ethnic minorities in the media throughout Europe	7
Analysis of Spanish media	2
How technology brings people closer together	1
The importance of compression of digital video	5
Cultural exchange with other European students	1
Different methodological approaches to media studies	1

FIGURE 3. Students' perception of what they learned during the project.

'I learned a lot about how immigrants are treated in the media and how we can make a change.'

— Which aspects of your learning process would you change/improve if you had to start again?

Surprisingly, students had a feeling they lacked *discussion with their peers*. This is interesting in light of SRL, as the importance of *peer discussion* becomes evident. It seemed that the setting of the TELE did not provide this possibility. But when asked why, one student pointed out that the reason for the lack of class discussion may have been because the course was in English:

'I participated more in the forum [of the virtual campus] than in class discussions. When you write in a foreign language, it is easier, because you have time to think about the sentences and you can use the delete button. When you speak English, you must have the idea very clearly in your head before you open your mouth. For me having to speak in English was a limitation in that sense.'

— How do you think you will use the acquired knowledge in digital technology in the future/in a different context?

Interestingly (see Fig. 5), all students mentioned video compression as one of the skills they would definitely use in the future: they will now be able to compress their own videos (3 students) and distribute them on the Internet (4 students). This implicitly shows the importance of digital technology for Media Literacy, especially in its last phase of production (see 'Digital Literacy and Media Literacy'). This idea was well expressed by a Mexican student:

'Thanks to the possibility of compression of digital video for the internet, immigrants and minorities can take a camera and film from their own point of view and show how they really live.'

On the other hand, none of the interviewees mentioned other contexts of representation distortion (gender, class, sexual orientation) as an example of how they could apply their newly acquired knowledge in Media Literacy.

Question 4: Which aspects of your learning process would you change/improve if you had to start again?	number of students (n=7)
Use the virtual forum more for discussion	3
More in-depth research about the topic	2
Concentrate more during sessions	1
Start my work earlier	1
Communicate more with other students	1
Participate more at the Media Forum	1

FIGURE 4. Aspects that students would change/improve about their learning process if they had to do the project again.

Question 5: How do you think you will use the acquired knowledge in digital technology in the future/in a different context?	Number of students who mentioned item (n=7)
For other courses at UB	2
In my daily life	4
To compress my own videos	3
Implement video on the internet	4

FIGURE 5. Students' predictions of how they will use the acquired technical knowledge in the future

## Conclusion

All students claim to have learnt about the question of representation of immigrants and ethnic minorities in the media. Apart from what they said in the interviews, we also have their video productions as a result at the end of the project. When analysing their audiovisual messages we could say that they reached at least the second phase of Media Literacy: the awareness/analysis phase, and some of them the evaluation phase (see 'Digital Literacy and Media Literacy').

As for the reflection on their learning process (meta-cognition), it is interesting to see that students felt they lacked discussion with their peers (see Fig. 4). Here, the importance of *peer discussion* in an SRL process becomes evident. In this case, the setting of the TELE apparently did not provide this possibility. Nevertheless, all the necessary conditions for discussion were present: face-to-face discussion in the TELE was provided by the class discussions, and the virtual discussion could be done through asynchronous (forum) and synchronous tools (chat). Thus, when analysing the reasons why students did not use these tools, we must point out that the whole course and the project were carried out in English. This could have discouraged students from discussing complex topics like this one, as one of the students suggests.

It is also interesting that all students mention the fact that they will now be able to compress their own videos and/or distribute them on the Internet (see Fig. 5). This implicitly shows the importance of *digital technology* for Media Literacy, especially in its last phase of production. It gives us an insight into the empowerment mechanisms related to literacy.

Although SRL was not explicitly addressed in the project, students used some SRL strategies for Media Literacy since they monitored and evaluated their learning process in the field of media literacy and compared it with other students'

during the Media Forum. However, these strategies do not seem to have had a key influence in acquiring Media Literacy skills as such.

With regard to the TELE, students seem to have benefited from it, as it was set for this course at the UB (see 'Settings of the TELE'): the blend of face-to-face sessions, the discussion with peers and students from other European countries, the course website and virtual campus tools, and the available digital technology fostered a favourable context for the acquisition of media literacy competences.

We could say that, rather than self-regulation, what helped students most in becoming more 'media literate' was the blended setting of the TELE itself.

For future research, it could be useful to find out in a more systematic way how SRL can be applied to media literacy education, based on the 'ideally' acquired competences as shown in Table III, and on the students' analysis of the messages (or discourse) when producing video. This could offer ideas about the relationship between literacy and empowerment, as social/cultural/ethnic minorities increasingly appropriate the medium to claim their identity and representation in society.

## NOTES

1. Correspondence regarding this article should be sent to [cilia@lmi.ub.es](mailto:cilia@lmi.ub.es).
2. More detailed information on the project: <http://www.lmi.ub.es/eclipse/>.
3. The development of the three phases of SRL can be found at <http://vcs.ccc.cccd.edu/crs/star/educ120/intro2SRL.htm> (project EDUC 120, Orientation to Expert Learning).
4. [http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=40338&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=40338&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html).
5. Literacy in the Information Age: Final Report of the International Adult Literacy Survey, OECD 2000. <http://www1.oecd.org/publications/e-book/8100051e.pdf>.
6. Definition by the Jamaican Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture. <http://www.moec.gov.jm/literacy.htm>.
7. See Gramsci's extensive comments on literacy in Gramsci, A. (1971), *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, New York: International Publishers.
8. <http://www.moec.gov.jm/literacy.htm>.
9. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literacy> As to the reliability of Wikipedia entries, see a recent study in the journal 'Nature' (14 Dec 2005): <http://npg.nature.com/news/2005/051212/full/438900a.html>.
10. As pointed out by Jill Goodreau in 'Outlining the Process of Developing the course "Cultural Studies, the Classroom and the Public Sphere"'. November 26, 1998, <http://www.uoguelph.ca/culture/bibliography.htm>.
11. Definitions based on the Official Journal of the European Union, 19.7.2003. [http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/elearning/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/elearning/index_en.html).
12. <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media>.
13. Center for Media Literacy: [www.medialit.org](http://www.medialit.org).
14. Based on the criteria of the Center for Media Literacy: [http://www.medialit.org/about\\_cml.html](http://www.medialit.org/about_cml.html).
15. <http://www.lmi.ub.es/eclipse/>.
16. The expression 'blended' is understood in the context of *blended learning* as defined in Aiello & Willem (2004) and in Bartolomé & Grané (2004).

17. See all videos at: [www.lmi.ub.es/eclipse](http://www.lmi.ub.es/eclipse). DVD1 (Analysis) and DVD2 (Production) available on request: [cilia@lmi.ub.es](mailto:cilia@lmi.ub.es).

## REFERENCES

- AIELLO, M. & WILLEM, C. (2004) El blended learning como práctica transformadora, *Pixel-Bit Revista de Medios y Educación*, 23, pp. 21–26.
- BARTOLOMÉ, A. & GRANÉ M. (2004) Educación y Tecnología, de lo excepcional a lo cotidiano, *Aula*, 135, pp. 11–16.
- HACKER, D. J. (1998) Definitions and empirical foundations, in: D. J. HACKER, J. DUNLOSKY & A. C. GRAESSER (Eds) *Metacognition in educational theory and practice* (Mahwah, N.J., Lawrence Erlbaum Associates) pp. 1–23.
- HARVEY, L. & KNIGHT, P. (1996) *Transforming Higher Education* (Buckingham, The Society for Research into Higher Education & the Open University Press).
- CASTELLS, M. (1996) *The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture. Volume 1: The Rise of the Network Society* (Oxford and Malden, MA, Blackwell Publishers).
- CAMPBELL, C. P. (1995) *Race, Myth and the News* (Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage).
- CENTER FOR MEDIA LITERACY (2001) <http://www.medialit.org>.
- FREIRE, P. & MACEDO, D. (1987) *Literacy: Reading the word and the world* (South Hadley, MA, Bergin & Garvey).
- FREIRE, P. (1988) *Cultural Action for Freedom* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard Educational Review).
- GOODMAN, S. (2003) *Teaching Youth Media. A Critical Guide to Literacy, Video Production, and Social Change* (New York, Teachers College Press).
- GRAMSCI, A. (1971) *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York, International Publishers).
- MCQUAIL, D. (2000) *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory* (4th edition) (London, Sage).
- PIETTE, J. (2003) ¿Qué es un receptor crítico?, in: R. MURDOCHOWICZ (Ed) *Comunicación, medios y educación* (Barcelona, Ediciones Octaedro).
- SCHUNK, D. H., & ZIMMERMAN, B. J. (1998) *Self-Regulated Learning: From Teaching to Self-Reflective Practice* (New York, Guilford Press).
- SHEPHERD, R. (2003) Contenidos y conceptos en una educación en medios, in: R. MURDOCHOWICZ (Ed) *Comunicación, Medios y Educación* (Barcelona, Ediciones Octaedro).
- WILLIAMS, J. D. & SNIPPER, G. C. (1990) *Literacy and Bilingualism* (New York, Longman).
- WORSNOP, C. (2003) *Orthodoxy is the Enemy: Four Ways NOT to Teach Media Literacy* (Center for Media Literacy, <http://www.medialit.org>).
- ZIMMERMAN, B. J. (1990) Self-regulated learning and academic achievement: an overview, *Educational Psychologist*, 25, pp. 3–17.
- ZIMMERMAN, B. J. (1998) Academic studying and the development of personal skill: a self-regulatory perspective, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 33, pp. 73–86.