

AV Pedagogy: Categorizing and Comparisons

Experiencing films is of primary importance. But Film **Education** cannot just be random film experiences. Education may provide a systematic context for experiencing films and reflecting on them. Discourse elaborating on a film experience will encourage the “translation” of personal impressions into communication between the members of an audience which shared the same experience. Two examples for providing and organizing film experiences in an educational context:

- **The educational power of categorizing:**

Primitive and crude (often simplistic) categorizations of films by the pupils can be a powerful educational tool enhancing their argumentation and negotiation skills, essential for the development of critical thinking. Each time pupils watch a film or a film’s excerpt, it may be useful asking them to agree categorizing it in simple categories (e.g. silent – sound, color – BW, fiction – documentary, simple film technology – extravagant film technology etc) and to try to support their choice with an example. A template suggesting pairs of categories would be useful for the teacher.

- **The educational power of comparisons:**

Comparing films that share one major common characteristic (e.g. theme) made by different directors and representing a variety of film aesthetics (not only European), can reveal issues of film aesthetics beyond the common remarks of “what the story was about” to which the pupils usually focus. Do they tell similar stories? How do they differ? Can we describe our different impression for each one of them? Through comparisons children will develop their own perspective of film history.

e.g. Films with trains:



Clement's "Battle of rail", 1946



Keaton's "The General", 1926



Lumiere's
"Arrival of a train",
1896



Frankenheimer's
"The Train", 1964



Hitchcock's
"The lady vanishes", 1938

(Slides from PPT used in teacher training to encourage comparisons. The corresponding DVDs are easily accessible in the Internet or in DVD libraries).

comparisons between audiovisual texts
(TV programs triggering "non-watching" activity
e.g. discussions, role playing, writing etc.)



Disney, 1994



Muppet show, 1980

Preschool children: "... all kinds of bears"

Representation questions, questions about
stereotypes, aesthetic questions...

comparisons between audiovisual texts
(TV programs triggering "non-watching" activity
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Cinecitta, 1960



TV, 1998



Disney, 1997

Primary school: "... all kinds of Hercules"

Representation questions, questions about
stereotypes, aesthetic questions...

menis.th



D. Lean, 1948

menis.th



C. Reed, 1968

OLIVER TWIST

Α' Γυμνασίου



R. Polanski, 2005

BBC, 1985



BBC, 1988



R. Castellani, 1956



F. Zeffirelli, 1968



B. Luhrman, 1996

Romeo and Juliet

A' Λυκείου

menis.th



F. W. Murnau, 1922



T. Fisher, 1966

Nosferatu-Dracula

A' Λυκείου



W. Herzog, 1979

menis.th



M. Brooks, 1995

Nosferatu-Dracula (II)

Α' Λυκείου



R. Polanski, 1967



A. L. Amirpour,
2014



F.F. Coppola, 1992

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