Lights! Camera! Action and the Brain

Lights! Camera! Action and the Brain: The Use of Film in Education

Edited by

Maher Bahloul and Carolyn Graham

CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARS PUBLISHING

Lights! Camera! Action and the Brain:
The Use of Film in Education,
Edited by Maher Bahloul and Carolyn Graham

This book first published 2012

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN (10): 1-4438-3657-5, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-3657-9

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

FOREWORD

Every minute, over 48 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube. And every day, over three billion videos are viewed on that one channel alone. We humans have become prolific both as consumers and producers of video. Increasingly, we use cameras to communicate our ideas and we use screens to listen to the ideas of others.

Driving this explosion is today's youth. Having grown up comfortably amidst emerging digital storytelling tools they naturally seek to connect with others through their cameras and their camera enabled phones, tablets, laptops and other devices. We have this tremendous outpouring of activity and creation by young people around the world passionately dedicating many hours of their day into the creation of personal video projects.

But at the very same time, we are also witnessing a crisis in schools, with increasing drop out rates, disengaged learners, and students generally aggravated that school is boring, irrelevant and disconnected from their real lives. Why do we not pay attention to this gap in passion?

As educators, mentors and parents, we need to realize that for an increasing number of students, cameras are the new keyboard, and video production and viewing has become a large and meaningful part of these young people's daily landscape.

This is where filmmaking in the classroom comes in. It's an opportunity to connect students' passion for creating media with our educational objectives to provide students with meaningful, relevant learning.

Personal filmmaking, made viable through today's inexpensive and intuitive technologies, gives students an opportunity to express themselves in a modern dynamic language and at the same time, provides them with a methodology to creatively engage in the investigation of the world in which they live.

If you work with young people in any capacity, this book, LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION AND THE BRAIN: THE USE OF FILM IN EDUCATION, will inspire you. You will start to see the vast possibilities to tap into the passion that is waiting inside your own students by inviting them to create their own media.

Maher Bahloul and Carolyn Graham have invited leading educators from around the world to share their innovative approaches to integrating video production into learning. Innovators themselves, Maher and Carolyn have spent much of their lives exploring where the arts and learning intersect and how the use of the arts in education provides new opportunities for a diverse body of learners.

From elementary schools to universities, and across a wide range of age, ability and curriculum, they and the great teachers they have assembled, demonstrate how digital video production has an increasingly important role to contribute to today's classrooms.

In this book, you will see how different filmmaking projects have evolved and how concepts in film production were taught. You will see how filmmaking projects follow a certain path: developing ideas, planning, production, editing and distribution.

Often, detailed lessons and practical suggestions on specific technologies and procedures are included. Personal observations and candid feedback from students and teachers are generously volunteered. Through these observations, we are offered a window into how filmmaking in the classroom is making a real difference in the lives of learners.

One of the most interesting things that struck me about this book, beyond the insights, examples and variety of filmmaking and video integration ideas, was simply enjoying how each of these teachers brought their own passions, interests and excitement into the film projects that they formed for their students.

For me, here lies one of the most important, though subtle, truths of the book. When we bring ourselves to a project, our experiences, history, adversities, victories, passions and wisdom guide us to create a personal authenticity as educators that can become a bridge to help students cross over from the side of facts to the side of understanding.

When I read about each of the educators in this book bringing their own experiences to the project, it reminded me that authentic teaching fuels authentic learning for students. Being vulnerable and open as teachers invites students to look at their own lives and find out how what is being learned is true for themselves. Finding that connection can make all the difference. But it begins with the teacher leading that exploration.

These teachers in the following pages are all learners first, daring to explore new directions in learning, and willing to share their raw ideas and insights with you and the world. They have built a wonderful bridge for us to travel over.

What does this mean to you, as an educator interested in beginning or expanding your use of filmmaking in the classroom? And how can this book help?

This book is an extremely rich resource. Each of the chapters brings forth different perspectives and ideas on purpose, planning, implementing and reviewing filmmaking projects. I recommend keeping a notebook handy as you start reading your brain will thank you as you scramble to jot down ideas that come to you as your own projects begin to take shape. You can take advantage of the paths that they have blazed, in order to blaze your own.

Remember, this book is not a technical manual on film production; there are many exhaustive books and web sites where you and your students can learn about the latest camera, lighting, sound and editing equipment and techniques. Rather, this book is about the application of filmmaking into learning environments, and about the thinking that goes into such an undertaking. It focuses on how filmmaking increases student engagement, personal reflection, critical thinking, media literacy and civic participation.

Because of this emphasis, this book will remain a timely resource for years to come. The filmmaking projects described here are ultimately about facilitating projects that enable young people to communicate and explore their ideas, whether that is with today's digital video technology or with some future recording and broadcasting formats yet unknown.

I have noticed over the years that as students and teachers create their films, they discover that filmmaking is about collaboration, that films are nourished with the skills, perspectives, and genius that each artist contributes.

And so it is fitting to see this book, LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION AND THE BRAIN: THE USE OF FILM IN EDUCATION created by such a diverse team of educators from around the world, each contributing their own talents, perspectives and genius to this conversation on the emerging use of filmmaking in education.

I am pleased and honored that Maher and Carolyn invited me to be part of this conversation as well. When my book, *The Director in the Classroom* was first published in 2001, I was advocating for the use of filmmaking in schools, not to graduate filmmakers, but to graduate problem solvers, critical thinkers and people who could work with others to make the imagined real. I was convinced that the many skills embedded within a filmmaking project benefited a wide range of learners, and contributed to the development of communication, personal, interpersonal

and higher order thinking skills which could be transferred throughout the students learning and to their lives beyond graduation.

More than a decade later and still joyously working with teachers around the globe, I am continually inspired to see how filmmaking is used in learning, excited by the expanding integration of filmmaking projects across curriculum, and ultimately witnessing the resulting growing presence of student voices heard in our world.

Specifically, I see an emerging desire by students to create media that matters, to use their voice to create videos that invite conversation and action. You can see this for yourself by watching the growing list of student film festivals around the world that relate to raising awareness and bringing about environmental, economic, cultural or social reform. And I see the same thing with educators, increasingly interested in integrating not only filmmaking, but purpose, meaning and relevance into their teaching design.

I look forward to hearing about the new projects and new voices that will be created by readers of this book. Remember, you need not be an expert filmmaker to begin teaching filmmaking in the classroom; you may have never used a video camera in your life. Don’t worry! your students will take care of learning, and teaching you, the technology.

But what they do need from you is your authentic self, complete with its history, insight, passions and wisdom, to lead them into this adventure of learning and seeing through your unique, curious, and passionate lens.

Nikos Theodosakis
The Director in the Classroom
thedirectorintheclassroom.com
nikostheodosakis.com

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all the contributors for all the effort, time and professionalism they have demonstrated all along this extensive journey. Our special thanks and gratitude go to the book chapters' reviewers: Dr. Merryl Goldberg, Dr. Kevin Lacey, Dr. Nikos Theodosakis, Dr. Linda Waugh, and Dr. Shaun Hugh for the constructive feedback they have provided to authors of the many chapter proposals then to each chapter contributor and finally to the editors. Without such input, the quality of the included chapters would not have been the same.

INTRODUCTION

THE CAMERA IN THE CLASSROOM: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

MAHER BAHLOUL

There is no doubt that a large majority of our students are not only watching movies, they have also been involved in videogaming, youtubing, making clips and sharing them with friends and family members. From education to entertainment to revolution, the visual culture is fast growing, resulting in the growth of a visual filter that pushes for an eye-catching world if not a perfect one. When I asked my students on an English grammar course to draw sketches of Grammar, the entire activity turned into one of the best experiences they had ever had. The sketches were followed by introspective interviews which were filmed, resulting in a short production which they all watched in class; it had a major educational impact on them. This is not simply because the visual aspect of the activity is highly pleasing. It is also because it is part of a fast growing culture they value highly, a culture where students are active authors of content.[1] In addition, students tend to learn from such an experiential methodology, since experiencing establishes links between action and thought which reinforces learning.[2] In short, new pedagogies need to evolve and shift from teacher focused experience to student focused experience.

Why isn't there a "Hollywood" in every educational institution? Why aren't films and filmmakers at home within the field of "Education"? While evidence points to the fact that films inspire teaching, enhance learning and help connect with the various communities such as arts organizations, neighborhoods, parents, teachers and artists, most government and private educational offices and organizations have yet to

[1] Andrew Milne, "Designing Blended Learning Space to the Student Experience," in *Learning Spaces 2006*, ed. Deborah G. Oblinger (Educause, 2006) 11.1.
[2] John Dewey, *Experience & Education* (New York: Touchstone Press, 1997).

have their first discussion about incorporating arts in education in general and film in particular. It is quite clear that Bradshaw's question "Why aren't all films set in schools?" should be answered with no more delays.[3] The time has come to roll the camera in the classroom, in school's corridors, inside student centers, and in administrative offices. The time has come to give "media literacy" a "real/reel" place within school curricula. The time has come for teachers, students, artists, parents and administrators to embrace common projects through the lenses of the camera. The time has come to celebrate learning in and through the movies.

The arts have been and are being used in myriad ways to assist in developing educational expertise at both the content and skill levels. In the past, these have included drama, dance, music, visual and multi-arts.[4] In 2007, Goldman, Pea, Barron and Derry edited a volume titled "Video Research in the Learning Sciences" in which key theoretical, methodological and technological advances in relation to the uses of digital video-as-data are explored.[5] This book expands on the arts to include films, and goes beyond the use of video to focus on the making of video and short film as an integral aspect of video scholarship and supportive technologies. In other words, while current research has focused on various arts-based methodologies to assist and support learning and on the use of video in teaching and learning, the aim of the current volume is to help usher in digital media, video and filmmaking research.

Along the same line, literacy programs in most educational institutions have been addressing two key literacies: oral and written competencies. Thus courses targeting students' oral communication skills, such as "Public Speaking" courses, and others targeting students' written skills such as "Freshman Writing" courses, are nowadays part of every undergraduate program in most American-based education colleges and universities. With the advent of computers and the internet, a new literacy has been introduced; it is called "Information Literacy" whereby students are introduced to effective ways of conducting internet searches whether through open sources, such as Google, Yahoo, and other, or much more controlled sources, such as library databases. While the first two literacies

[3] Peter Bradshaw, "Starring You and Me," *Guardian*, February 24, 2004.
[4] James Catterall and Lyn Waldorf, "Chicago Arts Partnership in Education: Summary Evaluation," in *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*, ed. E.B. Fiske (Washington, DC: The Arts Education Partnership, 1999), 47-62.
[5] Ricki Goldman, Roy Pea, Brigid Barron, and Sharon J. Derry, *Video Research in the Learning Sciences* (London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2007).

appear to be quite different from the third one, at least from a functional perspective, it is clear that none of the above address any aspect of the visual literacy. Similar to the oral and written literacies, the visual one is used to convey meaning to an audience. Similar to the third literacy, the visual one makes use of digital technology. Thus, visual literacy might be said to encompass features of all of the current three literacies. This can easily be seen through a video production where sound, text, still image, moving image, body language and music all combine and interact to produce meaning. It is a multimodal medium that is able to combine various modes of communication. Nevertheless, it remains alien to most institutions, for no courses are addressing students' visual literacy competencies.

The latest statistics from the official web site of You Tube reveal a tremendous increase in traffic.[6] Founded in February 2005, You Tube allows people to discover, watch and share originally-made videos. According to You Tube, over three billion videos are viewed every day; users upload the equivalent of 240,000 full-length films every week; as for users' demographic, it is broad and includes young and older generations. Not only do people watch videos, they also get involved, and over 100 million people take a social action on YouTube (likes, shares, comments, etc.) every week. This phenomenon is part of an epistemological shift from print media to visual media. Posting letters of all types through the Post Office is being replaced by posting videos through You Tube and similar social media. When a colleague of mine received flowers on her birthday from her two sons during the Spring of 2010, she walked into my office and asked me to film a short thank you video clip. Anecdotal as it may be, this is a feature of a new visual culture whereby literacy and communication is going beyond the traditional walls of the oral and written media. It is a much richer, multimodal medium of communication: the Moving Image Media, or the Video. In Hull's terms, "the pictoral turn has supplanted the linguistic one, as images push words off the page and our lives become increasingly mediated by a popular visual culture."[6]

When students build confidence, overcome their fears and step out of their invisibility, they change from recipients of knowledge to creators of knowledge. Then, educators and teaching professionals can take a step back and watch, listen, appreciate and ask questions. Thus, the students take the lead and begin engineering the learning process. With this scene, I would like to invite readers to explore the wonders of one of the latest and

[6] Glynda A. Hull "At Last: Youth Culture and Digital Media: New Literacies for New Times," *Research in the Teaching of English* 38, no. 2 (2003): 230.

fastest growing trends in educational institutions: the use of the moving-picture, the film in education. Whether students are involved in social studies cases, inter- and intra-personal cases, language learning cases or cases relevant to the environment, the book is a valuable resource with several cases studies, experts' opinions and testimonials from students and community members. The overall message is that not only do students learn media literacy skills, but they also equip themselves with various transferable skills that are crucial for social and professional success.

The long standing pedagogies in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions place much more emphasis on the holder and disseminator of knowledge that is the teacher. The latest research has been challenging such an assumption, resulting in the teacher being seen as a facilitator of knowledge rather than a provider. Shifting focus had resulted in a number of pedagogical approaches that place the learner at the center, hence Problem Based Learning (PBL), the Experiential Learning Model (Kolb, 1984), the Situated Learning Model (Lave and Wenger, 1991) and the Student Centered philosophy (Weimer, 2002),[7] amongst several others that put learners at the forefront of their learning and involve them in the production of meaning. Creating a film from "script to screen," for instance, by students and for students with the help of the teacher, does not echo the current pedagogy whereby the teacher is the knowledge provider.

Schools and educational institutions, whether primary, secondary or tertiary, have always included in their mission some sort of community outreach. However, while some have managed to find their ways through the community, others are still looking for such opportunities. This is to some extent due to the lack of programs that would leave the educational institution premises and reach the community. While this is not the case in the United States, given the continuous linkage and support for such connections, it is quite the case in many European, Middle Eastern, African and Asian schools and institutions. If media and visual literacy courses are incorporated within the schools' curricula, reaching out to the various communities becomes a matter of simple scheduling. Documentaries, for instance, are excellent tools to connect students and students' research projects with the outside communities. Other video-based productions, such as plays, movies, musicals and the like can be scheduled for screening at community theatres, hence the direct connection

[7] David Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source for Learning and Development* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1984), 41; Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Maryellen Weimer, *Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002)

with parents, friends, neighbors and all administrative officials. Such video-based activities can evolve and include local and national screenings and competitions which further strengthen the ties between schools and their immediate and larger communities.

Research and Recent Trends within the Growing Field of LFM

Recent research and findings are highlighted in the following 13 chapters which we have organized into two different but interrelated sections. While the first part focuses on the salience of the current visual literacy and moving image culture, the second provides sample illustrations of such culture. As such, readers will find it convenient to learn more about various aspects of learning through film making and then move to reading sample illustrative projects from various educationalists in a variety of institutions and educational contexts. In other words, the first part focuses on the salience of visual literacy, and films in particular, within educational institutions. As such, while students are argued to be in desperate need of building a critical media literacy, teachers are also shown in need of encouragement, support and recognition. The second part includes a set of chapters in which authors reflect on their own experiments with the camera and the filmmaking process to promote various aspects of learning ranging from foreign languages to learning about the self and identity, therefore improving personal and interpersonal communication skills. From theory to practice, the chapters of the book make a clear case for the inclusion of media literacy in educational institutions, not simply as a subject matter but also as a means of conveying knowledge and producing much more sensible and creative citizens.

In Chapter 1, "Cognitive Theories of Motion Picture Editing," Glen Berry provides a highly informative account of the connection between the moving picture and the brain. The chapter highlights major mental processes in relation to common film edits and demonstrates how editing can communicate, influence and in some ways distort viewers' perceptions. In doing so, the chapter provides a detailed and clear account of different kinds of edits and their connections to the brain; hence the relationship between making films and reading them is shown to tie up with what the mind does and does not accept at any given moment of the moving image process. This is useful not only for the novice filmmaker but also the audience, whether they are young or adult students. The sections on classic scene construction creating tension and beyond continuity are very

informative. A number of scenes from films are analyzed, and this also is very stimulating. The argument that educators need to fully apprehend this process is well made, and a clear call for educational institutions to catch up with the fast evolving film culture by providing media literacy courses is also made.

Chapter 2, "Adaptation Nation: Medium Specificity in the UK" by Richard Berger, focuses on the notion of adaptation and the inter-relationship of the many visual and literary forms. It includes a valuable and appealing discussion on the historical development of film studies in the UK. It also reflects on and explores the complex relationship between film, literature and other visual forms. Berger makes a very convincing argument for pedagogical changes and a different mindset to meet the needs of the "digital native" through the proposal of the "film literacy for all" program. Thus, the use of film in the classroom goes beyond being a tool of enriching understanding of content; it becomes a part of a core general education program whereby language, literature and film are given one and the same weight. The author also challenges current institutions by suggesting to either catch up with the current technologies or lose inspiration.

In the third chapter by Kenneth Fox and Andrew Lambirth titled "Film and Pedagogy: Learning about Teaching at the Movies," the authors provide an account of an innovative project exploring the potential of the depiction of the teacher in film to stimulate dialogue around the style and skills of the teacher on the one hand and to inspire best teaching and learning practice on the other. As such, it is of interest to teachers and those involved in supporting the education and induction of teachers. It also offers an original perspective as the argument is contextualized within the current move to make teacher training more training than education. A convincing argument is also made as to the power of film to educate, influence and inform through a careful choice of appropriate films. The chapter successfully teases out some important issues such as the relationship between cinematic productions and discourse around pedagogy, and learning about teaching at the movies and teacher identity/critical thinking.

In Chapter 4 titled "Addressing Everyday Problems & Constructing Situated Identities: Youth Filmmaking in Schools," Brian Bailey not only provides an innovative and very important perspective on how the use of video and filmmaking can support young people in exploring their own experiences, expressing their "voice" and importantly making a difference, but he also calls on educators to pay closer attention to these changes in literacy and provide the current generation with opportunities to express

themselves through digital media. Bailey contends that filmmaking is a social practice which students actively use to make sense of their lives as they address problems and construct identities. On the basis of three different student productions, each addressing a complex social issue, namely violence, disappointments and intolerance, Bailey clearly shows that students manage to construct meaning and have access to "powerful discourse communities." Convincing narratives are offered that clearly demonstrate the affective nature of this kind of reflection. In linking this with constructing identity, defining and re-defining gender, critical thought and democratic social change, the importance and relevance of filmmaking is raised. It is another way of young people telling their stories, and schools ought to encourage such a medium.

In Chapter 5, "Moving Image Production and the Pedagogical Development of Media Literacy," Liam French, Stuart Moore and Kayla Parker reflect through an experiential learning case study on the extent to which the involvement of young people in filmmaking develops their critical thinking abilities and personal and social development, in addition to fostering such transferable skills as reasoning, meaning negotiation and problem solving. The results of the discussion relevant to various Enquiry-Based-Learning pedagogies also make it quite clear that much could be borrowed from such projects to reach others through curricula that value media literacy, not in the traditional sense of critical reading of media texts, but rather through involving learners in the making of media products and artefacts.

Along the same line, Susan Smith in Chapter 6 explores the phenomenon of Third Culture Kids (TCK) living in the Middle East through the medium of documentary filmmaking, and demonstrates how using such a medium can act as a catalyst for students to understand their own cultural identity, an important and worthwhile focus. A number of discussions related to "Participatory Documentaries," "Visual Anthropology," "Documentary as Pedagogy," "Power of Interviews," and "Doing is Learning" are the highlight of this chapter. In addition, rare are the studies which investigate learning through such a medium in the Middle East, hence the salience of this work. Within our current world where millions of people have for one reason or another found themselves living in a country far away from their own with different political, economic, social and cultural dynamics, the three key words which appear foregrounded within the word cloud diagram in Appendix B are "belong," "identity," and "Fermazi," the last one being the name of the student, are quite revealing. It is probably safe to assume that "belonging" shapes the "identity" and the "identity" is shaped by some sort of "belonging," hence

the intertwined relationship between the two. The documentary clearly shows the lack of belonging which has led to the lack of the clear identity. Fermazi appears quite "transformed" after producing the documentary. Thus, Smith concludes that documentary filmmaking is a driving force for creativity, learning, and self-discovery.

In Chapter 7, "Taking ACTION! Beyond and above the Walls of the Classroom," Kathy Sangha makes a convincing argument for the use of video and documentary filmmaking as a way of providing a voice for young people to explore their lives and experiences. In particular, it reflects upon the exploration of social issues, such as school bullying, domestic violence and child abuse through film. Through the documentary project, she shows the transformational power of filmmaking when she had the teacher compare one of the student's comments before and after the documentary. Robert changed from "I am not staying for this. I just want to see what is going on" to "I would like to be the one doing all the talking"; he changed from a shy and reluctant individual to an enthusiastic and proactive individual. Several other students' comments testify to the inspirational nature of filmmaking. In addition, some effective practical advice is given about how to set up projects and how to link with community organizations to access funding and other support.

Chapter 8 investigates language learning through filmmaking. Marco Aponte addresses issues of motivation in the second language learning classroom within the context of a UK university, and provides ample evidence for a positive correlation between learners' levels of motivation and the filmmaking task, including its six major steps, namely script writing, discussing, rehearsing, performing, shooting and editing, in addition to two related tasks, namely watching an introductory video and receiving technical support. The results are based on data collected from the instructor's observations, students' comments on their blogs, and students' responses to pre-test and post-test questionnaires. The chapter also draws on a good range of literature and previous research in the area of using videos and making films in the second language classroom. It concludes that learners' involvement in the making of short films has a favorable impact on their attitudes and levels of motivation in learning Spanish. Amongst other factors, combining academic tasks with creativity, whereby both individual and group work are encouraged, appear to have added value to the arts-based task.

In Chapter 9, filmmaking is shown to be highly promising in the contexts of special needs students. Bahloul and Mezghani, for instance, share with readers a mom's letter in which she explicates her child's transformation after he had gotten the DVD of the learning film of which

he was part and through which he began to develop bonds with the local language and culture. Here the authors make a strong case for the benefits of what they dub the "DVD-Effect." Alan, a child with acute autism, overcomes major language learning barriers after he gets the DVD of the film he had participated in and of which he was the hero. Though anecdotal for it relies to a large extent on Alan's mother's testimony, evidence points clearly to the fact that by watching himself speaking a new language, Alan overcame his fears, decided to take learning into his own hands and started a journey which surprised his parents. This conclusion echoes Jacqui Russel's testimony in Burnaford and Aprill's paper in chapter thirteen: "For kids with autism, their brains need to create a catalogue. Everything is a reference for them… and video is a perfect way of teaching them." [8]

"Why read if I want to make stuff?" asks Joanna Callaghan in Chapter 10 in which she explores filmmaking as part of a practice led research methodology whereby filmmaking is shown to extend beyond the boundaries of knowing a subject matter to being a medium for the production and interrogation of knowledge itself. Thus, knowledge exists through the experience of making, a pedagogical approach which departs from traditional norms whereby knowledge is generated through being passive recipients of information. In philosophy, students find it quite hard to understand concepts and ideas. Filmmaking is being used as a tool to turn the abstract into a visual entity, an esthetic product. In her short film "A Mind's Eye," for instance, Callaghan shows that Plato's complex thoughts are mediated through a playful delivery whereby the image of twins speaking to each other as if they were one man while they were two is sensibly explicated. In short, students tend to benefit intellectually and emotionally as they are exposed to new knowledge from intense involvement combining action, observation and interaction with professionals. Exploring philosophical concepts through filmmaking is an invitation to explore subjects that are beyond opinions and day to day reality. Thus, not only does theory inform practice, practice can extend and contribute to theory, Callaghan concludes. Overall, the chapter offers a convincing argument as to benefits of the practice led research approach. The focus on philosophy is certainly original and has not been explored.

In Chapter 11, Pierangela Diadori describes the filmmaking process to support the acquisition of a foreign language. The experience is based on a three-week summer course by the New York Film Academy combining ESL and filmmaking. It provides a great deal of detail, drawing on

[8] See this volume, p. 314.

literature relevant to learning through acting, scenarios and the arts in general in enhancing learners' foreign language skills. Learners' oral and written communication skills are shown to naturally improve as they get involved in the various pre-production, production and post-production activities which Diadori explains in great detail. The reader will also enjoy the various connections between learning aesthetics of language and developing SCANS skills, a list of three sets of foundation skills –basic skills, thinking skills and personal qualities- and five competencies: resources, interpersonal, information, systems and technology. Being a learning tool, filmmaking exhibits features of both the "humanistic methodology" and the "Cooperative Approach" based on the focus on the individual and the team work respectively. Thus, Foreign Language Learning through Filmmaking (FLLF) shows great promise in promoting learning theories based on pyscho-humanistic, cognitive, communicative and artistic approaches.

In Chapter 12, Maria Garrido reflects on an original project whereby Spanish ESL learners–prospective employees in the tourism and hospitality industry-film a number of role-play activities and then review their performances with the objective of improving a number of linguistic elements such as grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Not only does the chapter highlight the salience of visual literacy, it also shows the impact of the filming activity on learners' personal attitudes in relation to shyness and motivation. Teachers' responsibilities in connection with ethical standards in relation to filming young adults are also highlighted and shown to be quite serious and need to be taken into consideration. Thus, consent forms ought to be clearly read and signed so that duties and responsibilities are quite clear. As for the role-play activity itself, the very fact that it relates to the learners' future work after they exit the language learning program added much more relevance to the learners and brought about elements of creativity and fun. Although the filming activity brought more anxiety at first, it brought learners much more satisfaction after they noticed that their linguistic performance was much higher once compared to others who had not been involved in such an activity. Finally, video and filming are shown to exhibit superior features which help learners with the daunting task of learning a second language.

In the last chapter titled "Video as a Medium for Special Needs Students "Going Public": Two Case Studies in Urban Elementary Schools," Gail Burnaford and Arnold Aprill provide a convincing and compelling argument for the use of video (and drama) on the basis of two case studies with deaf and autistic students. The chapter demonstrates the great benefits that arise from using creative artists to support learning in

schools. Such benefits are both academic and non-academic for they go beyond the course content and boost inter-personal communication skills. In addition, thanks to the video, learners "step out from invisibility" and turn into leaders and creators of knowledge. The projects are evaluated and reflected upon within an action research methodology with the contribution of the views of the students, the teachers and the teaching artists.

Summary

The use of film in education is evolving without doubt. Though still in its initial experimental stages, current and future research does and will prove it indispensable and prolific. Educational institutions may choose to delay doing justice to it; however, they are compelled to pay much closer attention to it, especially as the current and forthcoming generations of students exhibit more and more interest in media literacy and films in particular. Learning theories and cognitive science appear not only to support such medium but also to champion its results, especially now that regular and special needs learners tend to feel much more at ease with learning through this prevailing medium. More than ever, the use of the camera, which for a long time has been confined to the entertainment industry, has shown potential in education. Having initiated bringing this influential teaching methodology to the classroom, it has become palpable that it will stay there, probably for a long time to come, and optimistically forever. We may one day witness a new generation of "Eduwood" movies based on classroom performance. The current book is a one major step forward towards achieving this goal.

References

Bradshaw, Peter. "Starring You and Me," *Guardian*, February 24. (2004)

Catterall, James and Lyn Waldorf, "Chicago Arts partnership in Education: Summary Evaluation," in *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*, edited by . E.B. Fiske, 47-62. Washngton, D.C: The Arts Education Partnership, 1999.

Dewey, John. *Experience & Education*. New York: Touchstone Press, 1997.

Goldman, Ricki, Roy Pea, Brigid Barron, and Sharon J. Derry, *Video Research in the Learning Sciences*. New Hull, Jersey, London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2007.

Glynda A. “At Last: Youth Culture and Digital Media: New Literacies for New Times.” *Research in the Teaching of English* 38, no. 2 (2003): 229 – 233.

Lave, Jean and Wenger, Etienne. *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Milne, Andrew. “Designing Blended Learning Space to the Student Experience.” In *Learning Spaces* 2006, edited by Deborah, G. Oblinger, 11.1-11.14. Educause, 2006.

Weimer, Maryellen. *Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002.

You Tube, “About You Tube,” www.youtube.com, accessed November 10, 2011, http://www.youtube.com/t/about_youtube.

PART I

LIGHT! CAMERA! ACTION AND THE BRAIN

CHAPTER ONE

COGNITIVE THEORIES OF MOTION PICTURE EDITING

BERRY GLEN

The focus of teaching communication skills in many educational institutions revolves around the written word, as it has for millennia. However, it is no longer possible to ignore the fact that motion picture and sound is becoming the medium du jour for students everywhere.[1] As a matter of fact, youth from 8-18 years old in the United States of America consume screen media at a rate that is over five times greater than print media.[2] Although it would be easy to describe this seismic shift as a recent occurrence, it is a process that has been ongoing since the Lumière brothers screened the first film in 1895. What makes the issue of pressing importance today is that this change is accelerating with ever increasing speed. With the emergence of YouTube in 2005, internet video has driven a massive explosion of not only the consumption of screen media but also its production. This phenomenon is what Lawrence Lessig described as "read-write culture,"[3] a movement dominated by youth that is becoming increasingly sophisticated. This new landscape of read-write culture is not only amorphous and rapidly changing but also comes with its own language and self-referential style.

Unfortunately, the level of sophistication at which the language of motion picture and sound is taught in most institutions is so low as to not deserve the term "sophisticated." Basic competency with motion picture

---

[1] Connie B. Budden, Janet F. Anthony, Michael C. Budden and Michael A. Jones, "Managing The Evolution Of A Revolution: Marketing Implications Of Internet Media Usage Among College Students," *College Teaching Methods & Styles Journal,* Third Quarter 2007*,* vol. 3, no. 3 (2007): 29-32.

[2] Donald F. Roberts and Ulla G. Foehr, *Kids and Media in America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 153.

[3] Lawrence Lessig, "Larry Lessig on Laws that Choke Creativity" presentation, TED, Monterey, California, USA, 2007.

is too many times considered a secondary priority at best and, at worst, ignored. This is not the world that we live in today. As educators, we have an obligation to provide students with the knowledge they need to navigate the world they will find as adults and we are failing them when it comes to media literacy.

One of the most important things we, as educators, can do is to approach teaching screen media as seriously as we do literature. An analysis and understanding of the language of moving images should be addressed with the same care and depth as the explication of poetry or the composition of an essay. Just as literature is the translation of an idea from the language of the mind to that of the written word, motion pictures are mental visualizations translated into a form that can be shared with an audience.

So how then to teach a student this language of motion picture at a level that will engage the sophisticated consumer and producer? Although the direct application would be best left to the individual instructor to suit their particular teaching style, a deeper understanding of the theories behind screen media would serve as a valuable foundation from which to form a lesson plan. As this is the process of translating a concept from the language of the mind to the screen, it is particularly important to understand the cognitive theories behind the construction of a motion picture. By gaining a better understanding of the workings of the mind in relation to the art, both student and educator can find ways to apply this theory to achieve their rhetorical objectives at a conscious and subconscious level.

The understanding and manipulation of human thought processes in filmmaking are frequently and pervasively found in the post production process, more specifically, the sequences of images created by the motion picture editor. In some ways, editing theory is one of the most intriguing aspects of filmmaking, for it explores the rhetorical and logical functioning of the human mind.

The most famous example, the Kuleshov Effect, is well known and has received significant attention not only within the field of filmmaking but also in psychology and neuroscience.[4] Although any exploration of the cognitive theories of editing would be remiss without addressing Kuleshov, there is much more to be understood about the psychology of the mind by looking through the editor's bag of tricks. Whether they

[4] Dean Mobbs, Nikolaus Weiskopf, Hakwan C. Lau, Eric Featherstone, Ray J. Dolan and Chris D. Frith, *The Kuleshov Effect: The Influence of Contextual Framing on Emotional Attributions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006)

realize it on a conscious level or not, many editors employ the same methods of eliciting a rhetorical response from the audience. This chapter will explore these methods and how, like any useful learning tool, finding the right edit points is the "discovery of a path"[5] rather than a technical exercise of "putting together." One of the most profound gifts that can be granted to a student is the ability to find their own way along a journey of self-realization, a goal that can be accomplished by understanding how one perceives the world and communicates that perspective to others.

The Hierarchy of Edits

Before one can journey down a path, one must first learn how to walk. The process of creating a syntagma, or sequence (to use the term of the editor,) is not an arbitrary one.[6] A shot by itself means nothing without context, a phenomenon known as deixis. The meaning derives not only from the composition of the sequence but also from how the segments are combined. This is the role of the editor, to join shots together into a stream of meaning which carries the story forward.

When approaching this combination of shots, one of the first objectives is to hide the edit from the eyes of the audience and lull them into "the willful suspension of disbelief." Like a magician, the editor can divert the attention of the audience away from the things s/he doesn't want them to see with a repertoire of cognitive tricks we will place in "The Hierarchy of Edits," the fundamentals of editing in the classical tradition. This hierarchy contains known opportunities to transition from one shot to another in a way that will be gracefully accepted by the mind. These transition points are arranged from most to least graceful but it is worth nothing that any can be used in combination with another.

1. Moving Camera

As described by Edward Dmytryk in *On Film Editing*, cutting on action is about creating a diversion.[7] When the camera is in motion, the entire frame is action. The eye has no stable point to focus on and will accept a cut, any kind of cut at any time. This is a fairly well known

[5] Walter Murch, *In the Blink of an Eye 2nd Revised* Edition (Los Angeles: Silman-James Press, 2001), 4.
[6] Frederick Luis Aldama, *Toward a Cognitive Theory of Narrative Acts.* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), 112.
[7] Edward Dmytryk, *On Film Editing* (Burlington: Focal Press, 1984), 30.