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Media Use in The Activities of Social Circus
– Perspectives from Brazil and Finland

Master's Thesis
Media education
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May 2017

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Master's thesis, Media education, 84 pages, 2 appendix

May 2017

The aim of this master's thesis is to describe and to understand the media use in social circus activities. Aspects concerning the media use in this context were studied, analyzed and explained using Hasebrink's (2012) definitions concerning the media use in general. This is a qualitative comparative case study that is motivated by the idea of media pedagogy and social circus as evolving social phenomena which share similar objectives. In addition to the framework of media educational research, the theoretical, methodological and pedagogical approach of social circus, play significant roles in this study.

This study was conducted in Casa de Cultura e Cidadania, Novo Hamburgo, Brazil and Sorin Sirkus, Tampere, Finland. The study material consists of the answers from 15 qualitative inquiries that were personally given to the professional social circus trainers in Brazil and in Finland, participatory observations and altogether four thematic personal interviews that were conducted in both case organizations, Casa de Cultura e Cidadania and Sorin Sirkus. A qualitative thematic content analysis was utilized for analysing the media use in the social circus activities.

According to this study, media is present today also in the activities of social circus; in clothing, speech, face-to-face gaming, et cetera. In Finland, which is known from its technological opportunities, the use of media equipment during the activities of the social circus by the trainers (when having access to the equipment) seemed to be almost non-existent according to the whole study data. In Novo Hamburgo, for example music from the Internet was used during the lessons, not just in the final shows, and computer was used during the lessons for different reasons.

This study locates three main themes, and eight reasons, for media use in the activities of social circus. One of these themes includes media pedagogical approaches. Following the findings of this study, media could also be used to enhance participation. In the future we will be dealing with a myriad of new factors when talking about media use in the social circus activities, so it is necessary to start applying media education to the educational programs for social circus trainers.

Key words: media use, social circus, media pedagogy, media literacy, communication, participation

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1 INTRODUCTION

During the last century the media has become more efficient (Sumiala 2010, 112). Media is present nowadays from the first years, even from the very first months of the childhood (Kotilainen & Kupiainen 2015, 7) to the old age, several hours per day. Today, we are living in a world that is under a constant change; in the middle of a time of fast paced technological change where the media is present everywhere (Mihailidis 2011, 152), where new technologies are developed almost before the old ones are fully adopted. Nowadays media is a big part of people's lives; all communication - including teaching- is mediated (Qvortrup 2007, 3) so media should not be seen anymore as something that is apart from daily life.

Also different art forms are more and more present in our lives (see f. ex. Rose 2003, 41), mostly because of media. Arts are said to be important part of education (Rose 2003, 41) and therefore, it is important to look for the connections between media and different pedagogical approaches that utilize art.

Media has been, more or less, in collaboration with circus during history; circus has needed the media for publicity and media has been selling by telling stories about the circus (see f. ex. Bolton, 2004, 53-57). Today media is involved with circus even more; different media technologies are used in shows (for example video projections and different audio technic solutions), documentaries are made about what happens behind the scenes or about the people behind the profession of a circus artist, different media contents can be seen mixed in a single show and circus figures are seen in different products (see for example Arrighi, 2015). You can even see media devices, like mobile phones, used as props in some circus acts and today social media has a significant role in the marketing of the shows. In this light, together with the fact that today most of us communicate thru different media, especially noticing the communality of mobile phones with Internet connection (for example Albert 2015, 34) it is interesting to see how media is present in the activities of social circus. The aim of this study is to examine how media is used in the activities of social circus in Brazil and in Finland.

Different media contents influence also the real life playing, which due to my experience as a social circus trainer, I consider to be an important part of social circus activities. Different media characters, like Batman, are adapted to the plays and some games are modified from computer games to real life, for example to enhance grouping. Real life playing has partially transformed into “media playing” (Uusitalo et. al. 2011, 69-70). Circus is all about fooling around, games, and trying things that seem impossible. In my work as a social circus trainer, and also as a circus teacher, I have seen how effective tool circus can be. It is important at this point to understand that this study discards the so called traditional circus totally. Traditional circus uses animal acts and the new circus includes various performances with different styles, implemented in various environments. The main elements of these performances are different circus skills (see Bolton 2004, 144-145) which are the foundation of social circus activities also.

Social circus is a tool used for preventing social exclusion. The main objective is not to train professional circus artists but sometimes, if the participant starts to train hard and stays focused, this can be the outcome. Social circus is aiming, by using different disciplines of circus, to help people to find their inner and outer capabilities, to increase self-esteem and finally, empower people. (McCutcheon, 2003; Lafortune & Bouchard, 2011; cf. Hyttinen et.al. 2011b). Social circus is generally used around the world among people with different kinds of difficulties (physical and psychological, health or social situation related, et cetera). (See f.e. Lafortune & Bouchard 2011, 14; Bolton 2004, 162). Social circus can also be used in various ways to help different communities. (Lafortune, 2011).

Both countries, Brazil and Finland, are known for their social circus activities but the realities of every day life in these two countries are very different (see f. ex. Custódio, 2015; Wilska & Pedrozo, 2007). In this study, the activities of social circus include everything that happens before, during, or after the lessons/workshops and is related to the activities. Here the media includes the whole range of media equipment; mobile phones, digital and video cameras et cetera, to modern communications like the Internet and the so-called ‘mass’ media. Also music, computer games and photography are considered as media in this study. Media texts are also considered as media, despite the fact that Buckingham rather talks about media texts as a separate term (see Buckingham 2003, 3).

This is a comparative case study where the data was collected from social circus trainers from Brazil and Finland, by using a qualitative inquiry and thematic personal interviews. Also participatory observation was used. The reason for choosing a comparative case study and using Brazil and

Finland as case units, was my personal interest towards the different realities in these two countries (see f. ex. Ceccon, 2009), my exchange programme in a Brazilian university and my personal experience as a social circus trainer. Because our days are fulfilled with different media (f. ex. Potter 2014; Scolari 2016) and even our face to face communication is today affected by media, it felt necessary to start studying the different ways how media might be used, intentionally or unintentionally, in the activities of social circus.

Due to the fact that there does not exist former studies concerning the media use in social circus activities, it was decided from the very beginning to first map the different media use in social circus activities in Finland and Brazil, to be later able to define different media use in social circus activities more precisely. Presumption was, that if media is not used where it is easily accessible, it would not be used in a place where there exists limits to access (f. ex. Flygvjberg 2012; Hasebrink 2012; Ceccon 2009).

This study has been conducted in Tampere, Finland and Novo Hamburgo, Brazil during 9.3.2015–30.5.2016 in two non-profit organisations that work with social circus. Sorin Sirkus in Finland is a circus school that was founded in 1985 and is financed partly by the Finnish government and the City of Tampere due to its educational status. Casa de Cultura e Cidadania is an institute that was founded in 2008 and it has its headquarters in São Paulo, Brazil. There are altogether seven centers in different cities around Brazil. All these centers are located in low-income communities. Almost all of these seven centers offer social circus among other activities. Sorin Sirkus is offering the activities of social circus to people in different ages; for example, to immigrants, prisoners, and children with special needs. Casa de Cultura e Cidadania in Novo Hamburgo was more focused on children and young from 6 to 17 years of age who came from the same poor neighborhood where the “Casa” was located. Sorin Sirkus is located in an industrial area and the participants of the social circus groups come from various places. The Finnish Sorin Sirkus, is practicing social circus differently than its Brazilian counterpart; groups are smaller, and the groups can be very heterogenic from groups of immigrant children to groups of adult male prisoners.

The aim is firstly to study the current media use in social circus activities and secondly, different possibilities for media use in that same context. The objective of this study is to describe, develop and understand the possible need for media use in the activities of social circus from the perspective of educational and social theory. This study will answer the following research question: How is media used in social circus activities? From this comparative perspective the aim is to conclude work

ideas *if* and *how* media could be used in social circus activities so that it would support the objectives of social circus.

Most of the trainers who participated in this study have participated in the social circus trainer program organized by Cirque du Soleil's social circus program *Cirque du Monde* (see p.32; also Kinnunen et. al. 2013, 61-64). The study data was collected between March 2015 and May 2016. Interviews of the trainers were conducted using a qualitative inquiry which combined structured and open questions. These inquiries were handed personally to the trainers. Also participatory observation was used in both countries to see how the media is used in reality in the activities of social circus. Personal interviews were conducted by four trainers, two from Tampere, Finland and two from Novo Hamburgo, Brazil.

This study seeks to build abstractions across these two cases to build a general explanation concerning media use in social circus activities in these two countries. In chapter two I will introduce how children and the young use media in these two countries and I will also explain the operational objectives of social circus. I will also discuss *media literacy* together with critical thinking. In chapter three I will explain how this study was conducted. The chapter four is dedicated to the research findings and chapter five to evaluating the study. In the last chapter I will suggest some ideas, and discuss the possible future of media use in social circus activities.

2 PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA: A LEARNING PERSPECTIVE

“The transformation process that the arts, in general, are currently undergoing is not new. As social beings, we are part of the changes that take place and, as a result, we engage in this visual and sonic universe of languages that surrounds us as it flows from television networks, radio stations, and computers, among many other modes”.

(Sabino, David-Silva & Pádua 2016, 66)

Art and media can both promote learning in several different ways and they both give various tools for self-expression (see Theis 2010, 343-346) and self-reflection which can lead to better knowledge about oneself (see f. ex. Bergsma 2011; Kincheloe 2003). Both, art and media can also be used as tools when teaching other things. They can be mixed, or used separately. Especially from the aspect of production (by preparing a final show or a project) they both provide opportunities for developing social and communication skills (see f. ex. Buckingham 2003, 129). From socio-cultural point of view learning and know-how is said to lead also to the ability to participate to the activities of a community (Lipponen 2007, 54). Participation projects are considered to raise awareness of children’s views and needs on the policy-making level. The whole society benefits from children’s experiences: the empowered children who form and defend their own opinions, and “are aware of their skills and needs and have experienced practical democratic decision making are competent, responsible citizens who will contribute to a society’s development” (Kränzl-Nagl & Zartler, 2010). According to some academics artistic expression can serve as a means for questioning and “for seeing, experiencing and to know otherwise” (Suoranta 2007, 331–335).

Media has been involved in the world of performing arts in many ways. For example “high-end” circuses have always striven to utilise the latest developments in technology in service of their productions and their marketing to a mass consumer audience” (Gillian 2015, 62). We all have some kind of a picture in our heads about circus. Even people who have never been at circus could, and probably would, describe a traditional circus touring with a tent, horses and other animal acts

because they saw this in a movie, or in a poster et cetera. Bolton (2004) reminds in his dissertation that media has had an influence on people's perceptions about circus, and how circus has been seen in different art forms in different times. According to him those representations still feed the imagination of people. Bolton (2004) adds that there is a symbiosis between these two, media and circus; while the other needs the publicity to get spectators, the other needs its circulation to rise by using stories from circus to attract advertisers. Educators, like teachers, and parents get their information about what circus is mainly from different media so also the perception of the children can be influenced by media. (Bolton 2004, 46). Also the term "circus" is used semantically in media; "balancing act" is referred when talking about a budget, and "safety net" is an expression used when talking about, for example about medical insurance (Bolton 2004, 50; see also Sabino et. al. 2016).

In the early days of cinema, like when Charlie Chaplin made *The Circus* (1928), he really walked the tight wire. Today stunt doubles, hidden wires and computer animation are familiar to most of the people, including children. Audience is not only entertained by the visual narrative but also intrigued and even provided an explanation of how it was all done. (Bolton 2004, 108). Nowadays you can find information quite easily and also very quickly from some media. Partly due to the portability of mobile phones and computers, media has found its way to the world of theatre, dance and circus, in a different way than in the past. Nowadays different media are used in performing arts in almost all imaginable ways: mobile phones are used as juggling props, newspapers are used in dance, tightwire is making music together with a computer, video projections can be seen on the performer, et cetera. Also the artists are using media as an innovative source for their own acts, so the media use has spread from marketing to the field of creative artistic production.

The beginning of research on media and learning can be traced back to the 1930s and the *Payne Fund studies*. The Payne Fund Studies are said to be the first large scale attempt to investigate the media's role in influencing people's attitudes and beliefs; and they are said to have explored ideas later popularized by other writers (Krendl et. al. 2016). According to Krendl, Ware, Reid and Warren the following types of learning became dominant in studies of media and learning as an outcome of the Payne studies:

*”(1) knowledge acquisition or the reception and retention of specific information;
(2) behavioral performance, defined as the imitation or repetition of actions
performed by others in media portrayals; and (3) socialization or general
knowledge, referring to attitudes about the world fostered by repeated exposure
to mass media content...”*

(Krendl et. al. 2016).

There are many ways to outline the world and the world of art can be seen as one (Suoranta 2003, 16). The positive effects of culture and art on well-being are no longer something that only artists and researchers know (see f.ex. Crossik & Kaszynska 2016; Kinnunen et. al. 2013; Siivonen et al. 2011); now they are also under a political debate (Siivonen, Kotilainen & Suoninen 2011, 167).

2.1 Defining the ‘media’ and ‘media use’

*“The media can be considered a combination of content –music, films, TV, radio,
publishing advertisements, and electronic games –along with associated
technological devices”.*

(Locsley 2009, 8)

Today, media has much wider definition depending on the chosen theory. Locsley wrote his definition almost a decade ago and a lot has changed in our media environment during that time. There is something that the media researchers today are in agreement about; the concept of media has become increasingly difficult to define (Ampuja 2010, 52). According to McQuail (2010) at least five different theories, social scientific, cultural, normative, operational and everyday theory, are relevant when talking about mass communication (McQuail 2010, 13-14), and mass communication is only one part of the current field of media research. Scolari reminds that a lot of mass communication theories and research methodologies have been created in almost one century, so it should be questioned if they are still useful in today’s society ”where the new communication paradigm is not broadcasting but networking” (Scolari 2016, 179).

Following socio-cultural theory, communication is a process that produces, preserves and changes our social reality; when talking about communication we are actually talking more about strengthening and establishing, than about information (Carey 2009). Therefore social circus could also be seen as media because after all it is a public performance (see Potter 2014; Carey 2009, 65). In addition, the fact that the performances of the new circus, which are the foundation of social circus

(Bolton, 2004; Lafortune & Bouchard 2011) are often inspired by different media together with the thought that the activities of social circus share Carey's idea about communication as culture (see Carey 2009), social circus could be considered as media.

There are several factors that explain *media use* (see Hasebrink 2012, 395). Hasebrink remarks that there are three different research areas that can be seen as a core of this field; *conditions for media use* (technical reach and access), *practices of media use* (usage and selection) and *meanings of media use* (reception/interaction and appropriation) (Hasebrink 2012, 382). According to him, the "technical reach" which is having an essential effect on the usage of the media in different countries, must not be ignored, but it should be treated separately from the practices and meanings of media use (Hasebrink 2012, 382).

2.2 Young people and the media in Brazil and Finland

Visual communication is present in everyday life of children and the young (Potter 2014; Laitinen 2007, 62). In Brazil and Finland watching TV has been the main leisure activity for young people in the recent years (Cecon 2009, 312; Rahja 2013, 3). Following the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and data collected between 2005 and 2010 Brazil has a bigger percentage of households with television and radio receivers than Finland (UNESCO, 2016, <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Communication/Documents/Media-statistics-pilot-survey-report.pdf>). In Finland, like in Brazil, there are differences; in some homes you can find plasma TVs with wireless Internet connections and in others there is no possibility to write emails because there is no computer, or data connection (Laitinen 2007, 63). Public places are more relevant for using computers especially for the low-income families as well as the rural population. In Brazil young people use public computers in public places like cybercafés (f.e. Kids Online Brazil, 2013) and in Finland they go to the public library where the Internet is offered free for the clients. Children and young people from 9 to 18 are the largest group of users in public libraries in Finland (see Mustikkamäki, 2013). Today, mobile phones are the lower-cost alternative especially to households of low socioeconomic status, because mobile phones can provide access to the Internet when there is no broadband Internet at home (Albert 2015, 34, see also Wilska & Pedrozo 2007). According to Scolari "mobile communication is at the centre of contemporary cultural convergence processes" (Scolari 2016, 182).

In Brazil, following the ICT Kids Online 2012 survey, almost half of the children start using Internet under the age of ten. One third starts to use it at eleven or more years of age (ICT Kids Online

2012). In Finland children start using internet approximately when they are eight years old, and one third of the children from nine to ten years old are using Internet daily (Eu Kids Online 2010). Empirical survey which was conducted in Finland 2001, and re-done in Brazil 2003–2004 revealed that there exists a surprising similarity in the use of and attitudes towards ICT (information and communications technologies) among young people aged 16-20 years in these two countries despite of the different socio-economic and cultural conditions. (Wilska & Pedrozo 2007, 343-344). One of the most important determinations for digital inclusion or exclusion especially in Brazil, is education (Bujokas & Rothberg 2014).

According to Wilska and Pedrozo (2007), in Brazil even one third of the young can be totally out of education at the age of 15–17. In Finland, according to OECD data from 2014 only 5,5% of the young from 15 up to 19 years old are not employed, in education or training (OECD, 2016). The poor quality of public education (f.ex. Bujokas & Rothberg 2014) is often seen as the primary source of many of the problems, including digital exclusion, but also regional differences matter. (Wilska & Pedrozo 2007, 361). It must be emphasized that in countries like Brazil where the electricity can not always be taken for granted, access to and usage of electronic media can be limited (see f. ex. Bujokas & Rothberg 2014; Hasebrink 2012, 388).

A longitudinal research conducted in Finland (2007–2016) which studied the change of the media environment of children and young people, contemplated on the opportunities offered by the media, as well as children's sense of media, and their media literacy. The study revealed that media can fulfill different needs in the life of the children and the young depending on their age, and that young people are interested in the same things in real life than in online. (Uusitalo et al. 2011). According to the research media is used often when the young feel bored (Uusitalo et. al. 2011, 98; see also Beentjes et. al 2001, 102). By making connections through media young people can share their identities with other young people, regardless of their location. There are though considerable differences between, and within countries, when talking about expressing oneself through the media. (Kotilainen & Patlak-Shelat 2015, 152).

Researchers around the world have noticed that young people show local and global interest in news and current affairs (Kotilainen & Patlak-Shelat 2015, 151). Research data shows though that the Internet is not the key media for all, and therefore we should not forget print and broadcast media from information literacy programs (Kotilainen & Patlak-Shelat 2015, 154). TV for example forms the lifestyles and identity especially among poor young people (Wilska & Pedrozo 2007, 364; see

also Hasebrink 2012, 392). Suoranta remarks that mass media does not represent the different points of view but instead it gives voice only to certain people. (Suoranta 2003, 181-183; see also Potter 2014).

It has become increasingly easy for young people to become producers and disseminators of messages due to the spread of the Internet. In 2015, according to Official Statistics of Finland (OSF) 90% of the Finns from the age group 16 to 24 years used Internet several times a day and almost all from this age group followed a social network. (http://www.stat.fi/til/sutivi/2015/sutivi_2015_2015-11-26_fi.pdf). Probably the most famous, and therefore also most popular, social media platform among people of different ages all around the world is Facebook. According to OSF, Facebook was the most used social online platform in 2010 among young people from 16 to 24 years old in Finland. Twitter was used by one fifth and a bit less had a profile in LinkedIn. Facebook connects people in many different ways; you can share photos and videos, play games, chat with your friends, form groups and send messages privately or comment on things in public et cetera. Facebook is used more and more in advertising, politics and expressing yourself (Uusitalo et.al 2011, 166). It has a tendency to attract people, and the modern mobile phones with Internet connections have made it possible to access Facebook everywhere, and anytime.

According to EU Kids Online (2010), a bit more than one third of the Finnish children have a Facebook profile. More than half of the 9- to 16-year-olds have a profile in the social network and even more people from this age group use Internet almost on daily bases. Following Kids Online Brazil 2014, 80 per cent of the young people from 9 to 16 years living in Southern Brazil, where part of this research was conducted, use Internet approximately once a day. More than half of them share videos, pictures or music online. In general, the use of social networks among young Internet users in Brazil has remained high. Most of the Brazilian youth are using Facebook. In turn, the use of instant messaging (like WhatsApp) had increased of 25 percentage points since the previous edition, demonstrating the speed of changes in Internet use of children. (In this light it seems that the numbers are probably higher in Finland today). According to the Kids Online Brazil (2013) most of the children and young use Internet for school work, and additionally they watch videos and half of them download films or music. In Finland Internet is firstly used for school work, secondly for gaming and thirdly for watching videos. (Eu Kids Online, 2010). The media environment, and especially the way Internet is used, can change rapidly. That can be seen for example when examining social media and Facebook, which did not have such dominant status in 2010 comparing to the year 2013. (Kupiainen 2013, 7).

2.3 Contemporary learning and media literacy

When talking about learning the learning approach must be considered. The *constructionist* learning approach, which emphasizes the significance of real life participation in relation to effective learning experiences, is said to build on Jean Piaget's epistemological theory of *constructivism* (see Smith et. al. 1997). Piaget together with Lev Vygotsky are "the two most influential figures in psychological and educational research" (see Smith et. al. 1997). They both contemplated on constructivistic learning theory where the teacher is seen as a cognitive guide in the learning process, instead of being a mere knowledge transmitter (see f.e. Kincheloe 2003, 33; Smith et. al. 1997). There are different ways of perceiving constructivistic learning but most of the discussions center on the differences between the thinking of Piaget and Vygotsky (see Smith, et al. 1997). What the two theorists and constructivism as a whole have in common is the emphasis on the learner-centered approach.

The social circus is based on constructionistic learning, according to which the world itself is constructed through social interaction (see f. ex. Savin-Baden & Wimpenny 2014). In arts constructivism is said to have started at the late 1920s as a movement where art was used as a tool for social purposes (source unknown). The objectives of the social circus activities follow mainly this approach but simultaneously are a good example of constructivistic learning approach. Social circus trainer is like an instructor who gives tips that the participants adapt based on their earlier knowledge (see f. ex. Rose & Kincheloe 2003) depending on their own choice. They build their knowledge on what they already know.

Media pedagogy represents constructivistic learning approach; new skills and knowledge are actively built on what is already known. Sometimes this is achieved together with constructionistic approach; when new skills and knowledge are actively constructed by the participant, during the communication process with others (see f.e. Kincheloe 2003; also Carey 2009). Following Qvortrup (2007) media pedagogy includes three basic elements:

"First, it includes a theory of media education, i.e. a theory of the way in which one can teach the pupils and students to use media, and how one can teach them about media as a phenomenon in society. Second, it includes a theory of education within the context of "media-socialisation", i.e. within the context that mass media represent a special aspect of socialisation in relation to the pupils. Third, it includes a theory of educational media"

(Qvortrup 2007, 17).

Media education is said to lead to media literacy (for example Potter 2014; Mihailidis 2011). Media education can also help in making people aware of the value of educational attainments, especially in Brazil (Bujokas & Rothberg, 2014). In educational sense social circus follows the idea of *artful teaching* (Rose & Kincheloe, 2003) when participants due to the connection with the social circus trainer and other participants, together with the new skills learned, start seeing themselves in the world in a new light. In time they also get more interested about learning other things (Kincheloe 2003, 33; Bolton 2004, 148).

Let us take a step back and take a closer look at the idea of constructivist learning in the light of social circus. The actual circus skills taught in social circus are thought to construct participants' world views, and their self-image through participation. For example, in the beginning of the social circus activities the participants are often asked about their prior knowledge of circus. Often this knowledge is a representation from media (f. e. Bolton 2004). After participating in the activities they have constructed a new "level" of knowledge, not just about circus but also about themselves, and the surrounding world.

Learning the actual circus skills demands active constructing; juggling with three balls is a construction process using your existing knowledge (see below). All the circus activities (like any other form of art) are based on practicing first some (small) skill and building on that; for example, first you have to know how to throw one ball correctly, then you practice different throws with two balls. Once you have constructed and practiced on the skills needed for succeeding with three balls (namely rhythm and patterns), you are ready to add the third ball. For juggling with four balls, you have to get back to some basics with some two ball throws (at this point you will finally understand why these patterns were practiced in the first place), which means there is a constant construction process at work. Bolton observed in his work as a circus trainer that the moment adults learned to juggle three balls, or other skills, they produced behavior more associated with childhood, like enthusiasm of learning something new. He suggests that circus can have an effect at every stage of life. (Bolton 2004, 16-17; see also Kinnunen, et al. 2013, 56).

When talking about learning, the motivation is the key. Especially learning new skills demands perseverance. Also, learning different skills often develops creativity. Craft and Jeffrey (2008) place creativity at the center of education policy (Craft & Jeffrey, 2008) together with a number of studies which acknowledge that the arts are critical for learning (f. ex. Rose 2003, 41). Following Sintonen, creativity contributes to finding other solutions instead of acting schematically. It can be challenging

for learning today, that especially in Internet there is so much information, and numerous places and situations for to map and share experiences. (Sintonen, 2013, 89).

To be able to use media, especially today, you need to construct constantly on what you already know about media technics, different contents, media texts, media culture, about media in general. The construction process is essential especially when talking about achieving higher levels of media literacy (see Potter, 2014). Both, social circus and media education, share the idea of *critical pedagogy* by aiming to reduce the inequalities in society by increasing the functional abilities of the disadvantage, which is thought eventually to lead to social change and individual empowerment. (See McLaren & Giroux 2001; Suoranta 2003; Bergsma 2011). There are pedagogical links also between health promotion -which can be one of the objectives of social circus (see later p.28)- and media literacy to the Freire's model of empowerment education (Bergsma 2011, 26).

According to Suoranta "media culture is molding the mind and the body faster than the surgeon's knife" (Suoranta, 2003, 181-183). Following Mihailidis especially the young organize information today around their lives instead of organizing their life around information (Mihailidis 2011, 18). Therefore it is important to study how media is used in activities that involve learning, like the activities of social circus. According to Uusitalo, Vehmas and Kupiainen, people in different ages adapt things like locution and ways to operate from the media. They also try to find things to identify with. (Uusitalo et. al. 2011, 71). Therefore activities like social circus are important because there the communication happens between real people, in real-time which is seen as essential for maintaining a community (see f. ex. Carey 2009).

We should start to understand that children and young go online because they want to chat, make new friends, post pictures, express their opinions, make comments, et cetera. Most importantly they go online because they want to learn new things. (Guzzi, 2015, 199-200). In this light it seems that the different organizers in the field of social circus should start, at least to think about their own media use concerning the activities, or at least they should be aware of this phenomenon.

According to Giroux (2001) young could become critical subjects who can identify, absorb and modify the ways how they are influenced by and through the power of "others". Following him such pedagogical practices should aim towards social equality and political integrity which would benefit the young people (Giroux, 2001, 229-231). Kotilainen and Patlak-Shelat (2015) consider that young people around the world would benefit from media production projects that enhance connection,

expression and participation (Kotilainen & Patlak-Shelat 2015, 156). Social circus activities enhance all these elements mentioned (f. ex. Lafortune & Bouchard 2011; Kinnunen et. al. 2013). If these two fields would be mixed using careful pedagogic thinking, it might enhance participation, empowerment and learning even more (see f. ex. Bergsma 2011).

Participation in art and culture is said to foster civic dialogue and commitment (Crossik & Kaszynska, 2016, 58; Rahja 2016, 78). In my work as social circus trainer I have seen how participating in social circus activities has launched dialogue with other people, and encouraged to social commitment. However, it is challenging to examine the effects of performing art. The participants may have other hobbies, which makes it difficult to define and isolate the effects to specific activities, like social circus (Kinnunen & Lidman, 2013, 53).

Media is a term that has a lot of meanings; it can mean the mass media, media devices, social media, Internet and lot of other things from comics to advertising (see Potter 2014; Buckingham 2003; Uusitalo et. al. 2011; Sumiala 2010). Figuratively speaking the term media has turned into a knob of a really huge umbrella. Media has a lot of power and it has a tendency to organize even our social reality (Potter, 2014; Alasuutari, 2000). We are living in a mediated culture where even the experiences of the people are disseminated by different media (Buckingham, 2003, 58; Seppänen 2005, 93). Like Luke (1998) defines it, we are living in the world of ‘the look’; we get new information from different media devices and we are in the midst of different media messages daily. We are also living in a globally corporate time where

“marketability of cultures is enabled and sustained by post-industrial capitalism which has given rise to postmodern economies of culture; anyone anywhere can buy into countless variations of innumerable cultural styles”.

(Luke, 1998, 26)

The overwhelming amount of different media has also influenced art (see McLuhan, 1964). Bolton considers circus activities to be liberating, to some extent, to the imaginations of young people. He also considers them to restore “their vision from commercial to individual ownership”. (Bolton 2004, 36). According to Bolton anyone should take inspiration from the circus people when trying to establish and maintain an individual identity, especially when faced with corporate culture in its full power. (Bolton. 2004.134). Following McLuhan, practicing art can provide immunity against the effects of modern media, because artists have always been questioning things that have affect on societies and according to him art can be seen as “advance knowledge of how to cope with the psychic and social consequences of the next technology” (McLuhan 1964, 13-14).

According to Potter (2013) person's own experiences about real life and their knowledge about themselves eventually help them to become more media literate. "We learn norms by observing other people in real life and thru the media". (Potter 2013, 266). People's own lifestyles define how much people are affected by the media. If a person has an active lifestyle, including interaction with many different people and institutions, they are more likely to be less affected in comparison to those whose window to the real world is TV. (Potter 2013, 267). TV is seen as a window to the real world especially among children (who do not yet have a lot of real life experience), the poor, and ethnic minorities (see f. ex. Wilska & Pedrozo, 2007). In this light the social circus activities can be seen as a tool for media education. There exists a general pedagogical dilemma though, which according to Qvortrup (2007) is "particularly obvious in media education"; what do the participants actually learn, if media is used in the activities of social circus? (see Qvortrup 2007). How does it affect on the outcomes of the objectives?

Learning is a process that is not necessarily linear and predictable (Angrosino & Rosenberg 2013, 169). When talking about learning, it is important to remember the "transfer" -effect which is a term used in the field of education for the skills that can affect and/or help, in other areas of life outside the original context (Crossik & Kaszynska 2016, 115; Angrosino & Rosenberg 2013, 169). When you learn for example to walk on a tight wire, or manage a hola-hoop trick, that you first thought was impossible, it can make you more confident to start other tasks perceived as difficult. Media can also be seen as a pedagogically powerful tool for learning (Ceccon 2009, 313). According to Ceccon theoretical texts or well-intentioned lessons are not the way to forming a critical eye. Ceccon suggests that through a mix of theory and practice, like learning the principles of video production will open -to the young who are interested- doors also to other experiences. (Ceccon 2009, 315). For example making a documentary about somebody else's life can help to understand not just that certain person, but other people's experiences too.

Buckingham (2007) calls for the people's ability to evaluate and use critically the information provided by the Internet, in order to be able to transform it into knowledge. According to him asking questions about the origin of the information, including the "interests of its producers", the worldview it represents, and understanding how social and economic forces are related to technological developments and possibilities, are the key for transforming the information into knowledge. (Buckingham, 2007, 45-46). Following Mihailidis, building *media literacy* can be seen as a core of lifelong learning. He considers media literacy to be a core competence. He also remarks that new formal and informal pedagogies are needed to connect digital media culture to daily life (Mihailidis

2011, 30; see also Rahja, 2016).

As part of the activities of social circus there exists an educational possibility to teach also media literacy. For example, when the trainer of social circus is showing videos to the participants from YouTube how a certain trick should be done, and how not. The participant will understand that there are good and not so good instructions on the Internet, so in the future they will probably do more research to find out how reliable their source of information actually is. Nobel price winner Herbert Simon said that knowledge “doesn’t mean just the ability to remember and repeat information. It means the ability to find and be able to use it”. (National Research Council, 2004, 18).

There is another interesting point of view when talking about lifelong learning. According to Bolton at Central Queensland University a group of academics were using traditional circus as a model for exploring and explaining the issues of lifelong learning (Bolton 2004, 154). (It has to be mentioned that only one of those academics from the field of social circus that I contacted, had heard about this project. But it does not mean that it does not exist).

Although circus remains a relatively rare activity in schools, there are signs of interest among educationalists towards social circus (see f. ex. Beathier, Dubois & Lemenu, 2016) worldwide. For example, in Finland, Sorin Sirkus together with the University of Tampere, are mapping the need of academic education in the field of social circus. (Personal conversation with the director of Sorin Sirkus, Taina Kopra in August 2015; look also Beathier, Dubois & Lemenu, 2016). There are also several circus schools around the Europe that are planning together with different educational institutions to create educational programmes that include social circus (Beathier, Dubois & Lemenu, 2016).

2.3.1 Critical thinking and media literacy

According to Freire when the actions of human beings involve critical reflection, people are capable to perceive the reasons of the reality, and not just naively accept the knowledge of the reality (Freire, 1968, 145). We pay today for “free services” like Gmail, Facebook, Messenger, Skype et cetera with our information because that is what the advertisers are interested of; we pay with our data and we also produce contents for those platforms, for free (Scolari, 2016, 182). This is thought to lead to two theoretical approaches;”the acritical exaltation of participatory culture and user-generated contents and, on the other side, the critical approach to digital labour, social media

exploitation, surveillance and privacy” (Scolari, 2016, 182).

Potter (2013) reminds that we all are already media literate but there are different levels in media literacy. He suggests that we should shape our low-level media literacy to the higher level of media literacy. According to him being media literate means that you are able to build your life without letting media interfere with your decisions or actions, or at least to be aware of this phenomenon. Bergsma (2004) reminds also of the existing pedagogical links between public health and media literacy. (Bergsma, 2004). These links which Bergsma mentions, are also present in the activities of social circus (see later chpt. 4).

Research results indicate that critical awareness is one of the civic skills needed in information society today, and it is said that critical thinking is a basis for creativity (Kotilainen & Kupiainen 2015, 8). One of the main objectives of the critical media education is to increase ‘media savvy’ or ‘media sense’; to make people understand the functions of different forms of media and how different meanings are produced, to be able to analyze systematically, and produce different kind of media products. Critical media education encompasses the idea that analyzing media and producing media products will lead to deeper understanding of different contexts. (Suoranta, 2003, 161-162). It leans to the idea that the most significant learning experiences of the children and young people come from media culture, especially from popular culture (Suoranta, 2003, 172). On the other hand, media education, and therefore also media literacy skills, can easily be considered falsely as a multifunctional ”Swiss- knife” that is as a tool or a solution for everything (Rahja 2016, 100).

Today, media literacy can mean the ability to read media, and it can also mean the media educational activities. Media education is said to create critical citizens who are willing to participate and express themselves (f. e. Salokoski & Mustonen, 2007, 111). Some academics consider it to be challenging that also the media skills, which used to belong to the area of information and communication studies, seem to have moved to the media literacy studies (see f. ex. Rahja 2016). At the same time when others include updating the technical knowledge about communication being part of media education (Salokoski & Mustonen, 2007, 111), according to others so called technical skills should not be included to media education (see f.e. Buckingham, 2003).

Media education has grown significantly in Brazil; as a pedagogic methodology in non-formal educational practices and in the repertoires of social movements. The NGO-driven media education helps especially the favela dwellers to struggle against the impacts of social inequality

(Custódio 2015, 141-142). In Europe the history of media education dates back to the 1930s England. In Finland the larger discussion started in the end of 1980s. (Kupiainen, Sintonen & Suoranta, 2007, 22). Kotilainen (2007) reminds that because media education is still quite a young practice, it is continuously experimenting and developing (Kotilainen 2007, 156). In Finland media education seems to be integrated to the already wide scale of things that the language and literature teachers have to teach (see for example Ministry of education and culture in Finland, 2013). There is a space and a need outside the formal schooling too for media educational activities. In Brazil non-formal education is crucial, especially in favelas and other poor environments (Custódio 2015).

Today critical thinking is needed especially when "surfing" on the Internet. It seems that even when people are able to recognize for example the different media illustrations, it does not automatically mean that there is critical thinking involved. Perception does not necessarily mean awareness (Herkman, 2007, 159) and following Kotilainen & Patlak-Shelat even high media access, or high media use, does not necessarily associate with critical thinking (Kotilainen & Patlak-Shelat, 2015, 153-155). Due to the fact that everyone can load things on Internet today, it can be challenging to really separate the contents from each other, even for adults. For example, from YouTube you can watch tutorials about several circus tricks, but you can not be really sure if that person who made the tutorial really is a professional who knows what he or she is doing. You might try something yourself without knowing that it can be actually dangerous (this applies especially to fire spinning and acrobatics).

"Media literacy, as the educational response to digital culture, is predicated on teaching and learning to critically think, analyze, evaluate and create media and communication"

(Mihailidis 2011, 9)

Media education can be seen as a tool for educating people to better understand the surrounding world full of different kinds of media messages. Buckingham sees media education as a form of preparation instead of a form of protection. (Buckingham, 2003).

It is said that media education leads to media literacy (f. e. Potter 2014). Media education, or media literacy, is claimed to empower people through the process of critical analysis, "and to liberate them from the values and ideologies the media are assumed to impose upon them". (Buckingham 2003, 107). Vesterinen (2007) states that if there is an existing and interesting possibility to include media to the learning process, and if it is pedagogically sufficient for the activities, it is time to start

planning integrating social media into the practices, especially. According to him media education can be seen as a transdisciplinary thinking and action. (Vesterinen 2007, 83; also Scolari 2016).

2.3.2 Sharing, connectivity, participation and citizenship

This century together with social media and 'web 2.0' has enabled worldwide networking and publicity (Kupiainen, Sintonen & Suoranta, 2007, 16). New media can also be seen as interaction. It holds the possibility to combine different types of media. It also enables user-oriented activities and communication between individuals. (Mäkelä, 153-154, 2002). Communication, symbols, feelings and media are said to be the community-building materials of today (Sumiala, 2010, 28). It is important to remember though, that the relation between the community and media does not exist automatically, it is something that has to be built (Sumiala, 2010, 56). There is a risk though; the available resources and different guidelines can actually produce digital division. According to Rahja media literacy skills are in danger to polarize "not just between generations, but due to different cultural and sosio-economic reasons also within generations" (Rahja 2016, 102).

Development of the media education has been emerging simultaneously with the new media technology (Kupiainen, Sintonen & Suoranta 2007, 23). Following McLaren and Fischman (2001), it is important to acquire comprehensive literacy to be able to critically participate (McLaren & Fischman, 2001, 235-245). The term participation is used in the English speaking countries widely, mainly to describe social engagement (Lansdown 2010, 11). According to Pathak-Shelat et. al. youth, media, globalization and participation are politically and historically shaped and therefore take many different forms and meanings in different locations; young people in different countries can have different concepts in mind when talking for example about participation in media (Pathak-Shelat, Kotilainen & Hirsijärvi, 2015, 388-389). Lansdown reminds that participation can be challenging even for adults, because "opportunities for real engagement in active participatory democracy are limited" (Lansdown 2010, 12).

Ceccon refers to a study by Abramo and Branco about *The Profile of Brazilian Youth* which was conducted in 2005. According to the study 84% of the Brazilian youth believe they could change the world but only 2% of them are involved in actions to cope with the social problems like violence, misery, unemployment and drug abuse. In the past four decades Brazil has become more inclusive. In 1970 less than 5 % had telephones and only 32% of the homes had water services. By the year

2006 water services raised to 83 % and 74% of the population communicated via their own telephones. Forty years ago no one had computers and now statistics show that fifth of the population have entered the digital era. In Brazil this means altogether 40 million people. Despite the good statistics most of these boys and girls are poor. Poverty means more than having a little money, it affects to peoples choices including access to cultural and leisure spaces, and media (see Hasebrink 2012). According to the Abramo and Branco study 36% of the Brazilian youth have never attended a music show and 72% have never practiced any sports. (Cecon 2009, 301-302). In Brazil 7% of the households with income up to the minimum wage had internet access when households with income of five minimum wages the percentage for Internet access was 91%. (Guzzi 2014, 155).

Finland, on the contrary, performs quite well in many measures of well-being in relation to Brazil. In general, Finns are satisfied with their life by giving it a grade 7.4 when Brazilians give 7.0. Both of these figures are higher than the OECD average of 6.6. Finland is one of the strongest OECD countries in students' skills according to PISA results. Finland also ranks above average in subjective well-being, housing, environmental quality, personal security, social connections, civic engagement, and work-life balance. Regardless, there exists a considerable gap between the richest and poorest also in Finland. (OECD, 2015, <http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/countries/finland>). Finland does not make an exception from Brazil in the sense that the income defines what kind of media devices and media contents are used (see f. ex. Uusitalo et. al. 2011, 138).

“Media’s power to create a sense of community is based first and foremost on its ability to concentrate symbols, enabling to connect viewers and readers to the collectively shared social world” (Sumiala 2010, 91). According to Mihailidis discussions about citizenship are no longer justified without discussion of digital media (Mihailidis 2011, 26). Mihailidis reminds that sharing does not necessarily demand much, and it does not automatically mean participation. He sees behavior like this to be very common in the Internet culture. (Mihailidis 2011). Mihailidis states that young people acknowledge that their daily need of information and communication is centralized on social media platforms. At the same time young people see the connectivity in social media platforms “primarily personal, time wasting, social and shallow”. Mihailidis suspects that this will be less perceived as a holistic and vibrant tool for engagement in daily life. (Mihailidis 2011, 102).

Following Custódio in countries like Brazil where the state does not guarantee a quality basic services like education and healthcare, and where the urban violence is always present, democratic deliberation seems insufficient (Custódio 2015, 142-143). Custódio suggests that civic engagement

should not be defined according to our own suppositions. We should be more interested about how different people from different socio-economic backgrounds experience it (see Custódio 2015, 144;also Carey 2009). According to Custódio, media education should not be seen as a school discipline that turns the young to into engaged citizens. Custódio suggests that in order to be able to increase the range of the impact of media education practices, we should first broaden our perception of what citizenship, democracy and politics mean. (Custódio 2015, 144). Ceccon suggests that when young people are able to change their self-image in the process of participation, their self-esteem grows and they will be able to see themselves as citizens. According to him for example video production will help the young to become more critical when different media messages are concerned (Ceccon 2009, 317).

Mihailidis proposes what he calls “the 5A’s of media literacy”; access, awareness, assessment, appreciation and action. These 5A’s are directly linked to each other (see Mihailidis 2011, 128) and according to him they provide a framework for media engagement. Mihailidis 5 A’s a can be used as a tool to achieve civic engaged citizenship. Following Mihailidis 5A’s can be used also to help social advocacy organizations to improve their messaging strategies. (Mihailidis, 2011).

Theis (2010) reminds that developing citizenship happens gradually, and that there is no certain age when people suddenly become citizens. Citizenship is learned through various aspects of life, like everyday experiences and education. According to Theis the access to opportunities in culture is critical for developing and practicing citizenship skills. He considers that media are related to children’s civil rights and citizenship by providing access to information, and offering opportunities for self-expression. (Theis 2010, 343-346). When groups of young people are connected with each other through the Internet and exchange messages and cultural products, like pictures from social circus activities, such cooperation or connections can be considered as a new way of exerting citizenry. (See Ceccon, 2009, 320).

2.4 Aspects of social circus

“Social circus is a way of approaching social problems derived from an innovative fusion between circus arts and social intervention. Social circus aims to ensure the all around development and social inclusion of people at risk, especially youth. Precisely because it leaves room for freedom and creativity while demanding tenacity, perseverance and discipline, social circus empowers participants to use their marginality to express themselves and establish a new relationship with a society that has often excluded them.---

In countries gripped by conflicts or communal tensions, social circus can even be a vehicle of understanding and reconciliation between rival communities.”

(Lafortune & Bouchard, 2011, 13-14)

Media has affected the ways in which people interpret circus; in semantics comparisons like “clowning around” are used. Bolton reminds that sometimes the connotation leads to misinterpretation among people (Bolton, 2004). Circus in general is not focusing on a certain group of people. Circus belongs to people in different ages and it does not discriminate based on your gender or religious and political beliefs. It shares similarities with theater and dance. Sometimes the actual circus acts are compared to sports due to the amount of physical strength and flexibility that they demand. (Aulanko & Nieminen 1989, 11-12.) Social circus values more the experience of the participant and the result of that, than the artistic outcome. It is all about participation, so therefore social circus is more focused on the relations between the participants and the community, than to the actual circus technique. (Lafortune & Bouchard 2011, 14).

Cirque du Soleil released in 2016 *The Social Circus Community Survey* which was conducted between February and May 2015 in 500 organizations that organize social circus activities around the world. Over 200 social circus organizations responded to this survey. According to The Social Circus Community Survey, social circus activities are practised in 70 countries. Some of the organizations offer other activities as well, like theater, dance, visual arts, and multimedia. Most of the organizations are located in Europe and Latin America. According to The Social Circus Community Survey, one social circus lesson, or workshop takes approximately three hours. (<https://cirquedumonde.app.box.com/SocialCircusPortrait>). Due to my own experience, in Finland social circus lesson normally lasts for 1,5 hours.

Among different organizations and circus professionals there is still a difference in how the term ‘social circus’ is used. For example, in Finland where the University of Tampere organized an international seminar of social circus in December 2013, there were still differences in thinking about which ways of using circus as a tool should be called social circus and which not. Pilvi Kuitu, the director of Cultural center PiiPoo at Lempäälä, Finland, noted that handicapped people need empowering also, so that today there should not be definitions like “handy cirq”. (Personal notes from the Culture has an effect -seminar, Tampere, 2013). Also the pedagogy sector has not been clearly defined (Beauthier, Dubois & Lemenu, 2016, 10).

Social circus is not yet widely recognized among academics, so there is not much existing academic research available. In Brazil social circus is used mostly among children and the young living in the streets, or in poor neighborhoods, and that makes the reality very different compared to Finland for example. Before we can fully comprehend the term social circus, we must define the framework. Like mentioned before, the main objective of the social circus is not to train professional circus artists. There are other preset objectives like being able to handle the touch of another person, trust building, grouping, better self-esteem, being able to take controlled risks, et cetera. These objectives are achieved by using different disciplines of circus (see, f. ex. Bolton, 2004). Human pyramids are often used for all of the objectives mentioned above; to be able to build one you have to be trusted and be able to trust others, and you have to be able to handle a touch of another person. Unicycles can be used for example practicing perseverance, trapeze for safe risk taking, juggling for patience, et cetera. The steps to get to the 'goals' vary depending from the target group. Everything is planned carefully beforehand. The lesson itself might look sometimes like a chaos, but there is usually a well-planned structure inside, a hidden curriculum.

According to Lafortune & Bouchard (2011) in every workshop (or circus session) the participants are introduced to several different circus techniques (like juggling, acrobatics, stilts, unicycle, trampoline, magic et cetera). Workshops can also include dance, theater and clownery, depending on the target group. Part of the session is used for welcoming, warming up and grouping games. Also the rituals of arriving and departure have space in the schedule (Lafortune & Bouchard 2011, 43). The structure of a workshop, session or a lesson, (the term to be used varies) is quite the same throughout the world (Personal notes from international social circus -seminars from Holland 2013, and Belgium 2016).

Next I will demonstrate what kind of elements, or steps, are used to achieve the objectives. Each step will be explained later, so that it would be easier to understand the objectives of the activities. The example is from Hyttinen, Kakko, Karkkola and Åstrand (2011b): 1. Greeting, or arriving, rituals, 2. Warming up, 3. Stretching and strength, 4. Games and playing, 5. Circus disciplines, 6. Practicing performing, 7. Relaxation and 8. Ring of departure rituals. (Hyttinen et.al. 2011b, 41- 45).

At the beginning of the lesson every participant has the chance to be listened to. The objective is to generate loyalty among the participants and cultivate the sense of belonging to a group sharing a common space (f. ex. McCutcheon, 2003). Stretching and strength awake the body awareness and warm up the body for example for acrobatics, and also prevent from injuries. Games and playing are

used for example for consuming the extra energy, getting to know each other, trust building, grouping and focusing. In some games circus disciplines or props are used to get acquainted with them, for making it easier to the participant to confront the prop, or discipline, later. Different circus disciplines can be used for example to teach how to handle failure and/or to feel emotional success. Practicing performing helps the participants to learn to be watched and to watch others and it also supports creativity. Relaxation is used for calming down, being able to handle silence or staying still. In the ring of departure rituals, everyone has the possibility to be recognized and the important role of everyone as part of a group is valued. In Europe this seems to be more or less a standard probably partly due to the education provided by Cirque du Monde (see p.32) and the Caravan, The European Youth and Social Circus Network (f. ex. Beauthier et. al. 2016). In Novo Hamburgo, Brazil the lessons were a bit different (see later chpt. 4).

Target groups of the social circus vary depending on the situation in each country; in Jordan social circus is used in a refugee camp to give the Syrian kids something to do, in Australia practitioners work with asylum seekers, Aboriginal people and the marginalized youth, and in the Canadian Arctic social circus is brought to isolated Inuit populations. In Europe, Belfast Community Circus has been working since 1985 with youth from Northern Ireland in a context of highly inflamed intercommunity tensions. In 1991, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, an organization called *Se Essa Rua Fosse Minha* (If this were my street) was born, which was among the first to use circus as an intervention approach in Brazil. Maybe social circus has become popular in Brazil because it provides especially to the communities where children and the young are in danger to be excluded (or who are already excluded) a chance, not just to the young themselves, but also to the whole community to see themselves in another light. (See f. ex. Lafortune, 2011).

A hidden curriculum is a significant part of the social circus activities. Sometimes it is hidden from the participants so that they are able to achieve the desired results; this means that some of the groups are aware about the context in which the circus skills are taught, some not. Some groups might find the activities unpleasant if the hidden curriculum was revealed. In the worst scenario the target group would not participate to the activities at all. (Hyttinen, et. al. 2011b, 21). When a person already feels excluded it is not going to increase their participation to the society if that identity is underlined (Siivonen, Kotilainen & Suoninen 2011, 148).

Social circus is used in various contexts in health care also. In Ethiopia social circus is used as an educational tool for preventing HIV. (Lafortune & Bouchard 2011, 14; look also Bolton 2004, 162). Most of the participants worldwide are under 18 years old. Less than one fifth of the participants are 19-30 years old. Most of the activities worldwide are targeted at the at-risk youth (Portrait of Social Circus Survey, Cirque du Soleil, 2016). In big continents like South America or Africa the objectives of the activities seem to be social and health related (Cirque du Soleil, 2016). In Finland, according to my own experience, the objectives are more social. In Finland social circus is practiced with elderly people, refugees, the youth at risk, prisoners et cetera. In Brazil it is not so widely used, yet.

In social circus activities there are normally at least two instructors working with the group. The social circus trainer is not a therapist nor a community worker but they sometimes work with one. Passion towards circus, together with enthusiasm towards the innate abilities of the young, are the ground for a good circus trainer (McCutcheon 2003, 127). Social circus trainer also needs good social skills.

2.4.1 The significance of the social circus

”There is clear evidence of an association between arts and culture participation and self-reported subjective wellbeing, even when social, economic, and lifestyle factors are taken into account”

(Crossik & Kaszynska 2016, 107)

There are studies that concern themselves with social circus, and all of them seem to come to the conclusion that there are obvious benefits to the participants. Of course, social circus is not for everybody, but it seems that for most of the participants the effects are positive (see f. ex. Kinnunen et. al. 2013).

Finnish Cultural Foundation enabled during the years 2008–2011 a major project by financing different kinds of art projects all around Finland. These projects were targeted mainly to young people from 13 to 17 years who were hard to reach with traditional methods. Altogether 14 000 young people participated in the guidance of professional artists, and to various artistic activities from popular to high culture. Circus was one of these activities. The activities organized in this project called Myrsky

(Storm), were based on an idea that art is good for all young people; that especially young who were in danger to be socially excluded need art the most. (Siivonen, Kotilainen & Suoninen, 2011). Of the young who answered to the survey which was conducted as a part of the Myrsky -research, more than 36 % said that they were participating to the activities with full effort, 32 % participated quite eagerly and 19 % were participating mutably due to their own emotional state and schedules. 7 % said that they were not so interested about the activities. Those young people who had participated voluntarily in the activities were participating more enthusiastically than those who participated more or less because they had to (as part of a school day et cetera). Participation was stronger in the projects that involved theater or circus. (Siivonen, Kotilainen & Suoninen 2011, 64-65).

According to the study *Wellbeing Effects from Social Circus* (Kinnunen & Lidman, 2013), the social circus has “tangible social, psychological and physical benefits” on its participants and many of the skills that are learned in social circus activities can be applied in the world outside. Circus has a positive impact on the self-esteem, it teaches patience and helps the participants to be more considerate. On the other hand, according to the study, for example trust building games improve the team spirit only temporarily; it seems that after the circus sessions young people return to their old habits and behavioral patterns (Kinnunen & Lidman 2013, 9-10). According to Kinnunen & Lidman, seven out of ten of the participants noticed that the skills they learned in social circus activities were helpful in other areas of life, and almost every one of them would have wanted to continue the circus activities after the course. (Kinnunen, et. al. 2013, 26-28).

Siivonen, Kotilainen & Suoninen (2011) mention that there were some examples in Myrsky -project where the young felt actually more excluded in their communities due to these art projects. So there can be countereffects; making art does not necessarily mean positive results and reduce inequalities, it can also cause problems. When succesful, the processes of making art are still considered to have a powerful effect on reducing social exclusion when looking the whole life span of the young. (Siivonen, Kotilainen & Suoninen 2011, 123).

Bolton gives some examples in his dissertation about children who have the opportunity to overcome the “fear of the unsteady” in circus activities. (Bolton 2004, 38). Bolton also notes that circus can be seen as an alternative to other risk behavior, like drug abuse. He provides examples of the situations when the young people have told him they do not need to take drugs when there is a

chance of doing circus. (Bolton 2004, 189). I also received similar feedback once when I was teaching social circus to male prisoners.

Lafortune and Bouchard consider that human pyramids are a good example of effective circus techniques because when building a human pyramid, you have to think what others can do for you, but also what you can do for them (Lafortune & Bouchard 2011, 18). Bolton believes that when young people are forming their own circus skills, they will learn to trust and to be trusted. At the same time according to him it helps them to decide how to present themselves and to take a risk by following their dreams. They will also understand that hard work can be fun. (Bolton 2004, 148; see also Rose, 2003).

Measuring the effects of circus activity is challenging. However, social circus seems to have obvious effects on wellbeing; especially the social effects are visible. Primarily those who have problems tolerating failure and/or issues with self-esteem, are reported having positive psychological effects (see f. ex. Hyttinen et al. 2011a).

2.5 Summary

Digital culture is everywhere and it has already affected the way we learn. The learners today are turning, or have already turned, into molders and producers of information. This digital change affects the whole society and therefore it can be seen as having an impact also on arts and culture. (Sintonen, 2013, 89). Due to the mobility, media is now present also in social circus activities.

Education happens also outside formal schooling (see f. ex. Rose 2003, 40) Different media; contents and devices, are part of our daily lives. We learn from media. We all are media literate at some level, but we should strive to have a higher level of media literacy to really be aware of all the ways we are affected by media (Potter, 2014).

Social circus is all about social inclusion and empowering people (Lafortune & Bouchard 2011; Bolton 2004; McCutcheon 2003). Media education has the same objectives (Buckingham 2003; Mihailidis 2011; see also Livingstone, 2012). Therefore it is important, and also interesting, to study how these two fields relate.

It has also become necessary to develop new genres of knowledge by breaking the boundaries between the different educational purposes, and create new spaces to produce knowledge (Giroux & McLaren 2001, 203). Also Kotilainen and Kupiainen (2015) consider that there is an existing need to take multiple perspectives in the studies concerning media education (Kotilainen & Kupiainen 2015, 7). Following Livingstone (2012) a comparative agenda should be

”pursued collaboratively within the media and communication field, premised on both identifying common ground and recognizing difference, and on targeting structures of power in order to take an advantage of both national and transnational opportunities for social change”.

(Livingstone 2012, 426).

It is said that in the process of participation, young people are able to change their self-image; their self-esteem grows and they will be able to see themselves as citizens. (Ceccon 2009, 317). Because of the clear evidence of an association between arts and culture participation and self-reported subjective wellbeing (Crossik & Kaszynska, 2016, 107) it is important to study the social circus, where participation is one of the key elements. Buckingham notes that in media education the aim is not the participation for its own sake, but critical participation in media (Buckingham 2003, 84).

The purpose of this study is firstly to define the already existing media use in social circus activities and secondly, to investigate different possibilities for media use in that same context. The aim of this study is to describe, develop and understand how and why media is used in the activities of social circus from the educational and social point of view. My main question is “How media is used in social circus activities in Brazil and Finland?”

3 IMPLEMENTING THE RESEARCH

This study was conducted in Finland and Brazil during March 2015 and May 2016. The reason for conducting a comparative case study derived from my personal interest towards the international field of social circus, my background as a social circus trainer and my exchange studies in Brazil. From the beginning of the year 2015 I spent six months studying in the University of Feevale in Novo Hamburgo, Brazil. I had intentions to do some inquiries about media use in social circus while I was there, but unfortunately I was quite busy with my studies. In March 2015 I participated in a social circus seminar organized by Faculdade de Educação Física (FEF) in the Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP) in São Paulo district. The seminar was organized by Circo Rede do Mundo, the Brazilian umbrella organization of social circus. At the seminar it became obvious that also in Brazil, like in Finland, social circus is not really academically recognized. I noticed that the same goes for the rest of the world, when I participated to the Effective Circus seminar organized by the Centre for Practise as Research in Theatre, in the University of Tampere, Finland, a bit more than a year earlier. During that seminar in Finland, in December 2013, I was attending also as a participant in a training for the trainers of social circus. The training was conducted by Cirque du Monde (see f. ex. Kinnunen et. al. 2013, 61-63), which is an organization run by the renowned Canadian group of new circus, Cirque du Soleil. Cirque du Monde -programs operate in over 80 communities around the world. Since it was founded in 1995, some 500 000 children and young people have taken part. In 2000 they set up international training program for developing the personal and professional ethics of social circus trainers, to link the learning content to the realities of the communities around the world and to encourage people to use circus arts as a tool to achieve individual development. (<https://www.cirquedusoleil.com/en/about/global-citizenship/social-circus/social-circus-training.aspx>; <https://www.cirquedusoleil.com/en/about/global-citizenship/social-circus/cirque-du-monde.aspx>; see also Kinnunen et. al. 2013, 61-63).

According to Hasebrink, spending time in a foreign university and participating in international conferences can help in thinking in comperative terms and also being aware of the pitfalls of doing research in different countries (Hasebrink 2012, 394).

In this multicase study, a comparative international approach was used because it was considered to reveal more about the reality of media use in the activities of social circus in different circumstances. Comparative international approach is also considered to be an integral part of media studies (see f. ex. Livingstone 2012). My personal interest towards international academic research drove me to conduct this study in English. Since my studies at the University of Tampere were conducted mostly in Finnish, I have also used Finnish secondary sources in this thesis.

The focus of this study is in mapping the processes, similarities and differences which shape the practices and experiences across these two cases, Casa de Cultura e Cidadania in Novo Hamburgo, Brazil and Sorin Sirkus in Tampere, Finland. (See Pathak-Shelat, Kotilainen & Hirsijärvi 2015, 386). Comparative case study as a research method can give us tools to validate the challenges of the social circus in the future. At the same time it enables us to fit our national planning to the international trends (see Arminen & Alapuro 2004, 8; also Livingstone 2012).

Qualitative research can be considered problematic due to its problems concerning consciously or unconsciously done selecting; what things have been observed and reported (Mason 2002, 242). Here *media ecology theory* was used, which might also be called as ‘transmedia theory’, because it covers all media in all aspects (Scolari 2016, 180). According to Mason theories are “ever-changing forms of insight” and therefore cannot be considered as a description of reality itself (Mason 2002, 229). In qualitative research the research plan often molds while the research proceeds and if the circumstances demand it, those plans can be changed (Hirsijärvi et al. 1997, 164). When conducting this study, it was understood that qualitative research is a process which could be compared to a walk in a forest that is full of paths; in the beginning of the journey the researcher looks in all the possible directions and chooses the most interesting path. One of the most difficult tasks is not to get lost, to be constantly able to separate the chosen path from all those combining paths that lead here and there. Research question is the chosen path and research methods are the gear the researcher chooses to take with her to her journey. Her gear will define how she goes over the stones and where she can sleep, so eventually it affects how she will walk, and that will affect to what places she will be able to go.

According to Alasuutari a research method is important for the validity of the research even though qualitative research as itself is a method that needs a lot of perspective. Therefore, it can be quite challenging to determine beforehand all the methods that are going to be used. It is important to remember that without the rules of explicit research method there is a risk that the research will

turn out to be an empirical argumentation. Alasuutari reminds that the research method has to be in balance with the theoretical frames. He recognizes though that this can be difficult to achieve, due to the specific nature of the qualitative research method. (Alasuutari, 2011, 78 -89). It is significant that the researcher stays open for the unknown possibilities that may differ what was thought to be found, and let the evidence guide the interpretations rather than try to make the evidence fit for researchers own opinions and beliefs (Brennen 2013, 207). The research data should also open new perspectives and not just verify expected results (Eskola & Suoranta, 2005, 20). It is said that in qualitative research it can be challenging to take all the factors into account (Jokinen & Kovala 2004, 85) and that especially the size of sufficient research data can be difficult to define beforehand (Eskola & Suoranta 2005, 222).

There is no guarantee of truth and that is what makes actually all research problematic (Mason 2002, 162). A case study is most typically used especially when describing phenomena (Hirsjärvi et. al. 1997, 134), and case studies can be descriptions of few people or small groups (Mason 2002, 242). According to Vliegenthart (2012) data obtained with comparative research and single case study differ from each other (Vliegenthart 2012, 486). Practices may vary but the core principles can be seen to be similar (Pathak-Shelat, Kotilainen & Hirsijärvi 2015, 389).

The logic that has been used in this study is hard to reconstruct exactly like it was (see Eskola & Suoranta 2005, 221). It is still very important to show all the factors that have influenced certain decisions. Next I am trying to explain, as well as I can, how this comparative case study was conducted. This study was conducted using semi-structured inquiry, participatory observations and personal thematic interviews as research methods. The next table (Table 1) will demonstrate what was done, where and when.

Phase	Time period	Country	Location	Methods used
1	9.3.2015	Brazil	Universidade Estual de Campinas, Campinas	Inquiry
2	11.9.2015	Finland	Sorin Sirkus, Tampere	Inquiry
3	23.9 - 4.11.2015	Finland	Sorin Sirkus, Tampere	Observation
4	17.11 - 11.12.2015	Brazil	Casa de Cultura e Cidadania, Novo Hamburgo	Observation
5	March 2016	Brazil	My home in Novo Hamburgo	Interviews
6	May 2016	Finland	Sorin Sirkus, Tampere	Interviews

Table 1. Timing and the methods.

The empirical part of this study is based on observations, semi-structured inquiry and personal interviews concerning the media use in social circus activities in Brazil and Finland. It is important to note that this kind of study, comparing a developed country such as Finland and a developing country such as Brazil, by trying to investigate the media use among the activities of social circus is new. There are some academic studies about social circus and much more about media, but research that combines these two fields did not exist before. There are, of course, weaknesses in this kind of comparative case study because it cannot go very deeply into cultural, and other differences, that define media use (see Hasebrink 2012; Couldry & Hepp 2012). Especially the deep social and economic inequality in Brazil makes the comparison with Finland, that does not have same kind of inequality, challenging (Wilska & Pedrozo 2007, 348; see also Hasebrink 2012; Couldry & Hepp 2012). The social and cultural diversity does not automatically mean that different theories would not be plausible in another culture (Jokinen & Kovala 2004, 85). In this study I choose to use a transnational approach towards the activities of social circus. According to the critics of the traditional "container thinking" (where countries are seen as states with borders) in the field of comparative research, due to the globalization a more transnational approach can be used (Couldry & Hepp 2012, 256).

3.1 Organization of the comparative case study

"The advantage of the case-study is that it can 'close in' real-life situations and test views directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice"

(Flyvbjerg 2006, 235).

Conducting a case study can be of great help when studying new phenomena. Case study allows the researcher to introduce new ideas, or even theories (Laine, Bomberg & Jokinen 2008, 19) and conducting a case study can lead to real expertise, which according to Flyvbjerg can be reached "only via person's own experiences as practitioner of the relevant skills". According to him a case study can also prevent a research becoming unclear and untested (Flyvbjerg 2006, 223). According to Laine, Bomberg and Jokinen (2008) case study is a research strategy that contains several methods. They also remind that in English literature the word 'method' is a wider concept than in Finnish (Laine et al. 2008). In this research, mixed methods were used for achieving profound understanding how media is used in the activities of social circus.

In this comparative case study the focus is to find out how media is used in social circus activities and at the same time to find some indicators that would tell if there is a need, practice, or already some existing elements, to combine media education to the activities of social circus. In this study media use is defined as the use of mobile phones, media culture (games, music, literature, movies, et cetera), social media (Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp, et cetera), mass media (TV, radio, advertisement, newspapers), and the Internet in general. In this study also media equipment (cameras, audio devices, et cetera) were considered as media. By using a comparative case study the idea was to explore how media is used in social circus activities in these two countries. The interest was in noticing the possible differences and similarities in media use when comparing to the realities of the social circus activities in these two countries.

According to my own experience as a social circus trainer, in Finland media is not used much during the social circus activities by the trainers, not even music. Media culture and social media together with media related technical equipment, or media products, are in many several ways present in our lives. Therefore I started to think about the media use in social circus activities. I wanted to study more about this subject to expand my own knowledge about the already existing media use by mapping and benchmarking the situation in Brazil and in Finland.

3.1.1 Choosing a case

The historicity of social phenomena gives more dimension to comparative research. Nowadays the field has started to highlight the research of daily life and its practices. It is still challenging for comparative research to find cases that would share exactly the same concept. It must be emphasized that even though the institutions in different countries seem to be the same, the similarity is actually just formal (Arminen & Alapuro 2004, 15). According to Livingstone (2012), when conducting comparative research by selecting maximally diverse countries thoughtful general theoretical claims can be achieved (Livingstone 2012, 419). In comparative research the research cases are outlined basically as a whole of cause and effect (Arminen & Alapuro 2004, 14). Comparative case study was used here as a research method for achieving a better understanding of how and why media are used in the activities of social circus in Finland and Brazil. According to Livingstone nowadays when studying one phenomena in one country it is necessary to ask if the phenomenon is common in other countries around the world (Livingstone 2012, 417).

Sorin Sirkus is located in industrial estate at the neighborhood called Nekala in Tampere, Southern Finland. Sorin Sirkus has been giving arts education in circus since 1993 and at the moment the circus school has altogether 430 students on weekly basis. Most of their social circus activities are funded "through projects that cover the costs so that the participation is free of charge for the participant. The funding is both from public and private actors, including Ministry of Education, foundations and such" (Personal statement of viceprincipal Kaisa Penny, 8.9.2016). In 2009 Sorin Sirkus participated in a 2-year project of social circus. The objective was to study how groups with special needs could benefit from circus. In this project circus lessons were offered to immigrants, special classes and coping drug addicts. (Kaarninen Valpuri, Sorin Sirkus 30 years –history, <http://www.sorinsirkus.fi/30v/#y2009>). Sorin Sirkus has been participating in several projects concerning social circus, also internationally. Nowadays approximately 70 people participate on a weekly basis to the activities of social circus in Sorin Sirkus. (Sorin Sirkus, <http://www.sorinsirkus.fi/sirkuskoulu/> 24.2.2016; Personal statement of Kamilla Nisso, 2.3.2016).

Casa de Cultura e Cidadania in Novo Hamburgo was founded in July 2011 and was funded mainly by private money (AES Sul) due to the Brazilian law that private companies get discounts in taxes when they invest in a cultural project. In January 2016 Casa de Cultura e Cidadania in Novo Hamburgo, that was located at the neighbourhood of Canudos, got closed due to financing problems. In Novo Hamburgo the Casa de Cultura e Cidadania had approximately 280 children participating to the activities on a weekly basis. All the circus activities there can be considered as social circus. The children were also studying dance. (Casa de Cultura e Cidadania: http://www.casadeculturaecidadania.com.br/nossas_casas/novo_hamburgo/index.php, 24.2.2016)

Both of the cases here can be seen as critical cases (see f.e x. Flyvbjerg 2006, 230) due to the fact that Sorin Sirkus has all the equipment (cameras, music equipment, computers, tablets, et cetera.) and the city of Tampere has its own branch of the national TV, and the circus school has been in media several times, so they have already a well-existing relation also with professional media. Following Flyvbjerg, by selecting a critical case, information "that permits logical deductions", can be achieved (Flyvbjerg 2006, 230). Here it means that if a place like Sorin Sirkus that has all the possibilities and access, would not use media in their social circus activities it could mean that the other places would behave the same. Flyvbjerg reminds though that there are no universal methodological principles for identifying a critical case. He suggests that "If it is not valid for this case, then it is not valid for any (or only few) cases". (Flyvbjerg 2006). This thought was followed when choosing case units for this comparative case study.

3.2 Qualitative mixed methods

A case study suits well especially in those circumstances when the researcher is trying to find an answer to the questions *how* and *why*. (Laine et. al. 2008, 9-10). Methods for this study were chosen to enhance the reliability; qualitative inquiry was used for getting information from various aspects like attitudes, behavior, and opinions (Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 197) just to mention a few, and observations were used to reveal the ‘real world’; how things really are. It is said that observation has its place especially when the situations are hard to predict or they change rapidly, like in social circus activities. (Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 213).

In this study the qualitative inquiry was used to map the already existing media use and the future ideas concerning the media use in social circus activities in these two countries. Observations were used for revealing the reality of a certain case, and personal interviews were used to deepen the understanding of the context; when and why, or why not, media is used in these two specific cases.

3.2.1 Qualitative Inquiry for mapping the field

Inquiries and interviews provide an access to people’s thinking, feelings, beliefs, conceptions, and opinions (Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 197). In this study the qualitative semi-structured inquiry was used to to examine the themes around media use in social circus activities, and it was given to circus trainers who already had experience about social circus. Altogether 15 people answered to this inquiry; nine trainers from Brazil and six from Finland. Most of the informants were participating, or had already participated, to a training program organized by Cirque du Soleil’s social circus branch Cirque du Monde. Two of the trainers who answered to the inquiry, one from each country, were instructors who did not participate in that specific training but had otherwise more or less the same experience from this specific field than the others.

In Brazil nine trainers of social circus, from the age of 18 to 34 years, participated in this study. Five of them were males and four were females. Eight of the Brazilians trainers who answered to the inquiry were participating to a social circus trainer -program conducted by Cirque du Monde which is the most famous agent in the field of social circus, especially when talking about training the new social circus trainers. Participants of this training were given tools to also become the trainers of the future trainers in the field of social circus in Brazil. I understood that at least one of the participants participating to the Brazilian training was a former street kid who got out from the street mostly

because of social circus. Unfortunately, she did not want to answer my inquiry. In Finland, the same training organized by Cirque du Monde was targeted to those who already worked in the field to become better trainers. I myself am a trainer (trained f.ex. by Cirque du Monde) of the trainers, so I know that the participants of this training must already have quite a lot of experience from the field of social circus, as a trainer, or even as a former participant so all the informants here can be considered to be professionals in the field of social circus.

Intention was to make the inquiry as easy as possible for the people who participated to the study. Beforehand it was taken into account that people might not understand English, so the inquiry was translated in Portuguese. The English version was left to be seen in the final version of the inquiry to make it easier to code and analyze the papers later. Also the informants, in case they could understand English, could check the questions and future reader would also benefit from the translations in order to be able to re-evaluate this study. In the first part of the inquiry the focus was on how and why the trainers themselves use media as part the social circus activities. In the second part the focus was on the participants; what they do for example with their mobile phones and why, and the ways of using mass media in the activities. Also the role of professional journalism in the social circus activities (TV, radio, newspapers) was under spectrum. For example, if the professional journalists wrote some stories to newspapers about the social circus group/groups or if there had been some TV – or radio reports, and what were the effects on participants.

In Finland the inquiry was given to total of eight trainers, but two of them did not answer at all. Most of these people participated to the training organized by Cirque du Monde. One trainer from Finland did not participate in that specific training of social circus, but she had otherwise wide expertise as a social circus trainer. The trainers that answered to the inquiry in Finland were from 26 to 43 years old. All the respondents from Finland were women, and in my personal opinion that was kind of a shame, because there are several men who also work with social circus in Finland. But because this study is not focused on how different genders use media in the activities, this was not seen as relevant.

In Finland the inquiry was handed out during a social circus seminar in Sorin Sirkus where I was present as a participant. Surprisingly I had more challenges with my inquiries in Finland than in Brazil. I think that one reason could have been that the social circus trainers who had participated in the social circus training were people I know. I participated in the same training with them, and with many of them I had worked with, so it could have been that my personal qualities that are familiar to

them were actually an obstacle now. They might not consider me as a 'serious researcher' because they know me as a funny and relaxed person, someone they know. However, most of them seemed to consider this study important. Some of them asked for more time to answer, so they took the inquiries home with them. Some of them were apologizing that they are unfamiliar with this subject, media, which made me think if they understood the questions differently than their Brazilian counterparts.

In this study the word media was not very explicitly specified when constructing the inquiry. Some researchers see a problem in that (see Alasuutari 2011), but in this case it was necessary to leave some doors open also for the information that was not expected (see Hirsijärvi et al. 1997, 201).

The questions involving the trainers own personal answers were separated from the questions concerning participants' behavior. When a trainer is answering a question concerning the participants, it is second hand knowledge. Therefore, it is just an opinion of the trainer, not necessary the 'truth' of the participant. Because the trainers see a lot of things during and after the lessons, it was considered that their opinions are relevant. It is necessary to remember though that adults' "accounts may be misleading as a guide to understand childrens practices, pleasures and meanings" (Livingstone & Bovill 2001, 32). Alasuutari on the other hand remarks that it is possible to ask people to use their sociological imagination to give an eyewitness opinion about some phenomenon that the researcher is interested about. (Alasuutari 2011, 111).

There is not always a possibility to test the questions before using them (see Harkness 2012, 449). Unfortunately, there was no opportunity to pre-read the inquiry by someone who would have been familiar about the field of social circus and media education, but in the end the answers of the informants were relevant and expected, and even more. Despite of my satisfaction about the inquiry, it might have benefited the study even more, if there would have been a chance to test the questions beforehand. The cultural, socio-economical and educational difference between Finland and Brazil made me consider the possibility that the inquiry would become too 'Western' if it would be tested just with Finnish people. I was afraid that testing the inquiry only in Finland would make me ask the 'wrong' questions from the Brazilians. Of course, by not doing that testing in Finland there was a risk that the questionnaire would have failed in both countries.

Hirsijärvi, Remes and Sajavaara remind that when conducting a study there is no certainty that people have answered truthfully, or with care. Also how successful the given options for answering were, may remain unclear. It is also difficult to be really sure how much the respondents really know

about the field in question. (Hirsijärvi et. al. 1997, 195). The real life, and the real world -if people are acting the way they claim they be- are said to be revealed by observing (Hirsijärvi, Remes & Rajavaara 1997, 212).

3.2.2 Observation as a method for noticing the media use

To get more reliable results from Finland, all of the observations were conducted before the qualitative inquiry was handed out, because there was a chance that the trainers answering to the inquiry and those who would be interviewed, would be partly the same whose lessons would be observed. In Brazil the inquiries were given first, but to informants who (see Table 1, p. 34) would not be the same whose lessons would be observed.

Observations were conducted in two different locations; at Sorin Sirkus which is a Finnish NGO and one of the circus schools providing arts education in Finland, and at Casa de Cultura e Cidadania which is an institute of culture and citizenship in Brazil. These two case organizations are located in cities, that have almost exactly same amount (approximately 250 000) of habitants; Tampere in southern Finland, and Novo Hamburgo in southern Brazil. In Brazilian scale Novo Hamburgo is a small city and Tampere is one of the biggest cities in Finland. Similar observation groups were hard to find because of the heterogeneous groups that participate in social circus activities in these two countries. The observed groups vary from sex, age, size of the group, even the objectives for the activities can be different (see chpt. 2.4).

At Sorin Sirkus, two observation groups were used; both of the groups included, depending on the week, 7 to 19 young adults from 18 to 30 years, with different problems. In Finland each social circus workshop lasted one and a half an hour. During the first observation period, I was able to observe (due to the schedule of my master's thesis seminar in the University of Tampere) only every other week even though I had planned to conduct observations weekly. The groups that were observed during 23.9 – 4.11.2015 were both quite homogenous. At Casa de Cultura e Cidadania the observation groups included mainly children and young from 6 to 17 years of age. In Brazil, both of the observed groups had 25, sometimes up to 40, children and young people. One social circus lesson in Brazil lasted 3,5 hours. In Brazil, the lessons included a short snack time also. In both countries the participants were instructed by two social circus trainers. All the observation groups were asked for a permission for my presence in advance. I also asked for a permission face-to-face from the groups

before starting observation.

When conducting the observations, it was intentionally left out that the *media use* in the social circus activities would be observed, even though observation as a method is currently considered to be a more active process, making the subjects partners "who understand the goals of research and who help the researcher formulate and carry out the research plan" (Angrosino & Rosenberg 2013, 152). The groups were told that they were being observed in order to be able to compare the realities of how circus is taught in Finland and Brazil. In the presence of the trainers the participants were told that their behaviour or actions would not be under the spectrum, nor how the trainers do their work. By doing so the idea was that the activities would, despite my presence, remain as normal as possible. The observed were not told exactly what is observed because there is always a risk that the observed would change their behavior (Hirsijärvi & Hurme 1995, 18). The word 'media use' was left out to make sure that suddenly there would not be a situation when media would be used, just to give the expression that it is used. According to Hirsijärvi and Hurme it is possible to say to the people being observed that something else is being observed, but they add that this can be ethically questionable (Hirsijärvi & Hurme 1991, 18). Brennen strongly suggests that all researchers should disclose their research intentions to the people involved (Brennen 2013, 171). It is important to mention, that I could not tell to the participants that they are a part of social circus programme (see p.27; also Siivonen, Kotilainen & Suoninen 2011, 148).

Like mentioned, there might be some ethical challenges concerning observation for example when the researcher is in a middle of a situation, like here, where she is thinking how much to tell beforehand to the people who are going to be observed that what is actually observed (Hirsijärvi et. al. 1997, 214). Neither the observation groups nor the trainers that were teaching the groups, were told exactly what was observed. Here it was thought to be justified, because intimate things from their personal life were not under spectrum. Following Savin-Baden and Wimpenny this can be "foolhardy" when doing art-related study, but according to them "those undertaking the research should have anticipated the answers to ethical dilemmas..." (Savin-Baden & Wimpenny 2014, 95) like it was done here.

In this study under observation were mediated speech, the use of media equipment, mediated real life games, signs, the use of Internet and mobile phones during the activities of social circus, et cetera. According to Alasuutari, when talking about observation, it is better to keep your eyes wide open than just stare intensively at one spot (Alasuutari 2011, 262). Participatory observation was

chosen as a method due to the fact that in social circus activities, like social circus trainer Tytti Vuolle from Sorin Sirkus, Finland expressed it: “Observer who just sits there watching and does not participate, can effect negatively to the objectives of the activities and therefore can be even harmful to the group”. (Personal statement of Tytti Vuolle after a social circus lesson, 4.11.2015).

Most of the critique that is targeted towards observation, focus on the fact that the observer might have an influence on the observation group (Yin 1994, 80; Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 213). In Brazil this problem was minimized by introducing myself to the group way before starting observing (see Hirsjärvi et. al. 1997, 213). In Brazil I introduced myself to the children, young, and trainers at the Casa de Cultura e Cidadania almost a year before the observations. I was practicing circus with the children during my first stay in Novo Hamburgo so when I would come and do the actual observations I would not be a total stranger to them. Later I understood how good idea this was. When I came back for the observations, the children already knew me and behaved during the lessons like I was part of the group. They were no longer asking questions like “Who are you? “, “Where do you come from?” and “Why are you here?”, so I was able to focus on my observations. They were also over that stage where they want to “show off”. In Sorin Sirkus it helped a bit that both of the groups that were observed were familiar to me beforehand due to my work, or at least some of the participants were, which seemed to help those participants who did not know me beforehand, to relax in my presence.

In Finland, like in Brazil, I participated to the activities at the beginning of the circus lessons, so that I would be seen more as part of the group than an external observer. Then I slowly moved a bit to the side when the moment was suitable, or observations were made during the activities and marked down immediately when a chance came. I kept my notes to myself all the time, and no names were used when making notes from perceptions. Under observation was all imaginable media (see f. ex. Scolari 2016); from mediated talk (like when the participants were talking about seeing a movie or about their own mobile phone), of if games used had elements from different media, to using media technologies (cameras, CD-players or other media technic) or T-shirts (et cetera) as part of the activities.

If the observer has a close relationship with those being studied it can give greater access to their experiences (Brennen 2013, 163). It is necessary to remember though that even at its best when the presence of the observer has become normal and natural, the researcher is unable to know what are the real thoughts and reactions when the researcher is not present (Brennen 2013, 167). Also following Mason, if the researcher is not culturally sensiticed to seeing something, it is unlikely that

he or she will be able to notice it (Mason 2002, 92). All scientific knowledge is said to be based on “observations that are made from the reality” (Hirsijärvi & Hurme 1991, 17; see also Hirsijärvi et al. 1997, 212-217). In real life observing can be challenging due to several things, but it is said to be useful as a method especially when there are for example linguistic challenges, like here, involved (Hirsijärvi & Hurme 1991, 18). In this study observation was used as one method to see how media is really used in the activities of social circus, even though convincing the others that researcher’s stance for viewing the world is sensible, productive and effective can be complex (see Mason 2002, 156).

3.2.3 Thematic interviews for deepening understanding

Thematic personal interview is a method where certain themes are treated with specifying and clarifying questions (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 75). Interviews with the social circus trainers were conducted to be able to get to know more about their thoughts and habits concerning the media use in the activities of social circus. Interviews were used also to enhance understanding –following the findings from the inquiries and observations– concerning the media use in the activities of social circus.

It is said that interviews can open doors for discussion, and therefore it is possible for the researcher to get more coherent information (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 73). Thematic personal interviews were conducted with the trainers in locations which were suitable for the informants, and where there was no extra disturbance (like participants around). Due to the fact that Finnish is my native language, the interviews were shorter and more fluent with the trainers from Sorin Sirkus. The focus of the interviews was more on the instructors own media use concerning the activities of social circus. Also the pedagogical aspects behind the media use, or why media was not used in the activities, were under spectrum. The duration of the thematic personal interviews varied from 20 minutes (FI18, 2016) to 40 minutes (BR16, 2016). All the personal interviews were transcribed by a native speaker in order to reduce the potential linguistic misunderstandings. The personal interviews were coded according to the country of the interviewed, and the coding followed a linear pattern following the timing of this study.

It is recommended that the interviewees should view the questions before the actual interview (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 73). In this case study the interviewed were not able to see the questions beforehand. Reason for this was an attempt to remove the option that they would plan their answers too much which could jeopardize the fidelity of this study (see Mason 2002, 114-115, 126). Mason

warns about the triggers that make it easy for the people to make assumptions that are inappropriate, but according to him it is natural for those being interviewed to say what they think the other wants to hear (Mason 2002, 114-115, 126).

3.3 Analyzing the study data

In qualitative research the research material is often collected and analyzed simultaneously, so therefore the analysis occurs in my study through the whole research process (see Hirsjärvi et. al. 1997). When analyzing the study data, Hasebrink's (2012) definitions were used like he suggests, as guidelines (see Hasebrink 2012, 383) when defining the media use in the activities of social circus in Finland and Brazil.

All the informants were given separate codes for making the analysis easier and systematic. The informants were given codes so that Brazilian informants that answered to the inquiry share the codes from BR1 to BR9. BR10 and BR11 are interviewed trainers from Novo Hamburgo. The coding continues so that from FI12 to F17 the informants are those trainers from Finland who answered to to questionnaire and FI18 together with FI19 are the interviewed trainers from Tampere. The coding was kept as a continuum that followed the timing (see Table 1, p.34).

It is said that analyzing the results should lead to synthesis which after Hirsjärvi, Remes and Sajavaara should lead to clear answers to the research problem (Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 230). Therefore, inductive content analysis was used for analyzing the whole material. The intention was to strive to reveal unexpected matters (see Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 164). A thematic approach was used to understand different reasons for the media use in social circus activities (see later chpt 4.3).

When analyzing the findings, Hasebrink's definitions were operated so that the conditions for media use follow Hasebrink's suggestions (Hasebrink 2012, 382-383) and in addition, the access to the social circus activities itself; the participant's access to social circus activities and from there to media was also considered to be included as a question of reach and access (see Hasebrink 2012). For example, in Brazil the trainers seemed to inform the homes of the participants by using Whatsapp, leaflets and phone calls. Sometimes the trainer was calling the participants at home asking why certain child was not present, so therefore this kind of activity is here considered to affect the access of using media, because the activities of social circus can in some cases be the only place where certain media is confronted by the participant (see f. ex. Wilska & Pedrozo 2007; Ceccon 2009).

Practice of media use here includes all the used, or usable media including technical equipments (mobile phones and other portable and non-portable media technics) together with different media platforms and contents, et cetera (see Hasebrink, 2012). The meanings of media use in this study include the reasons why different media is used, and the outcomes and effects of the media use. The focus of this study was slightly appropriated towards the meanings of media use, because it answers the questions how and why media is used, or is not used, in the activities of social circus (see Hasebrink, 2012).

3.3.1 Analyzing mixed methods

A qualitative inquiry was used to get more information about *how* and *why* media is used in the activities of social circus in Finland and in Brazil in general. Therefore it was important that the trainers answering the inquiry would already have experience from the field of social circus. In this study the inquiry was given to trainers who had already participated, or were going to participate on a social training programme conducted by Cirque du Monde (see p.32).

A coding protocol was developed to locate themes around media use in social circus activities towards the categories explored in the inquiry. Some main themes of how, and why, media is used during the activities of social circus were searched for. Hasebrink's (2012) definitions concerning media use (see Hasebrink, 2012) were used as a tool for defining media use in social circus activities. Even though different types or themes seem to appear from the research material it is the researcher who makes the typology, and therefore themes in this study can be seen to be constructed by the researcher (see Alasuutari, 2011, 120).

Participatory observation was used here as a method to see how media is actually used during the social circus lessons by both, by the trainers and the participants. The observations were written down and they were compared with the data from the inquiries to find answers to the questions of how and why media is used in the social circus activities. After comparing the data between the qualitative inquiry and participatory observation the interest shifted towards the questions of why media is used, and why it is not used *during* the social circus lessons/workshops and could it or should it be used, and would it somehow affect the activities. This approach was chosen because according to my experience, the actual 'teaching', social interaction and communication happens during the social circus activities.

Following the whole study data, three main themes that define media use in social circus activities were formed. According to the study data there also existed media pedagogical elements (see later chpt. 4; also Qvortrup, 2007).

4 RESEARCH FINDINGS

Media use can be studied from many different aspects, and there are many things that can define media use (Hasebrink 2012; see also chapter 2.1). In this study altogether 15 social circus trainers; nine trainers from Brazil (BR1–BR9, 2015) and six trainers from Finland (FI10–FI15, 2015), answered to the qualitative inquiry concerning the media use in the activities of social circus. Most of the trainers had already participated, or were participating at the moment in the social trainer education –program organized by Cirque du Monde (see p.32). Two of the trainers, one from each country, who answered to the inquiry did not participate in that specific training, but were otherwise eligible for this study. In addition to the inquiry, two trainers from both countries were personally interviewed. Participatory observation was also used as a method when studying the media use in social circus activities.

The complexity of the social circus activities itself; different organizers (private and public organizations) with different funding, and heterogenic target groups in different locations and circumstances, makes the media use in social circus to be different in every case. Following this comparative case study, there exists media use in social circus activities in Finland and Brazil, and media is used by both parties; the trainers and the participants. The findings indicated that even though there would; for example due to the lack of equipment, not be "access" or "usage", media *is* used in the social circus activities (see later chpt 4.4). According to Hasebrink (2012) the practices of media use are one of the three main features that can define media use, and those practices include usage and selection. Hasebrink sets the capability of a person to use certain media under the definition of conditions for media use. The usage and selection refer to the available media (contents, platforms et cetera), that have been provided and selected. (Hasebrink, 2012, 382-383). Following Hasebrink the actual "technical reach" settles under the aspect of conditions for media use, where the question is more about the social, political and economical decisions made (like if there is an infrastructural possibility for media use; existing cable service, et cetera). Following him the conditions for media use should be separated from the practices and meanings of media use (Hasebrink 2012).

The findings of this study indicate strongly that there are also some media pedagogical aspects when talking about the media use in the activities of social circus (see later chpt 4.4.1.). In this chapter I will demonstrate the full results of this study. First I will introduce and compare the data collected using the qualitative inquiry together with the different themes for media use in social circus. Later I will further discuss the media use in the social circus activities in these two cases, Sorin Sirkus in Tampere, Finland and Casa de Cultura e Cidadania in Novo Hamburgo, Brazil.

4.1 Media use in social circus activities today

It seemed first, according to my own observations from the international seminars concerning social circus, together with my personal experience as a social circus trainer, that the structure of the social circus lesson, or workshop, is quite the same all over Europe. Therefore I thought it might be same in Brazil too. In reality, the social circus lessons that were observed in Brazil and Finland, differed quite substantially from each other.

In both countries there is, at the beginning and in the end of each lesson, a circle where the participants gather to sit or stand and share a moment when everybody can be acknowledged. In this circle everybody is given the chance to be listened, but also silence is valued. In Finland after the circle in the beginning, there are normally some real life games with preset objectives. These games can help the participants, not just to warm up the body, but also in the becoming circus tasks. (Hyttinen et al. 2011b, 43; Lafortune & Bouchard, 2011). These games were not used in Brazil at all. At this point it is good to remember that this is a comparative case study, so these results from Novo Hamburgo might not be generalized. Especially in those places in Brazil, like in Londrina, where the trainers have participated to the social circus training program by Cirque du Monde (see p.32), the practices might be different. Also the organizational background can be seen as having an effect on the way media is used (f.e. Hasebrink 2012) in the social circus activities.

According to the findings of this study in both countries, Brazil and Finland, there exists media use in several forms in the activities of social circus; Internet helps the trainers of social circus to get new ideas from different media content, to learn new techniques, to find new music and keep connected with other trainers and different institutions, also, media culture exists in speech, the participants use mobile phones to take pictures during the lessons, professional journalists are writing stories about the activities, et cetera.

Following the data from the inquiries, in both countries most of the trainers had the possibility and access (see Hasebrink 2012) to use the Internet for the activities of social circus. All the Brazilian informants reported using also video projectors, or other media technologies as part of their social circus activities for several reasons;”to show videos, pictures and documentaries about circus and other arts, and also to entertain the kids (BR5 2015), according to others demonstrative videos were used as an example to show some movements (BR8 2015) and for showing “curiosities, and where the circus material props originated from” (BR9 2015). In Finland most of the trainers did not answer to this specific question, but those who did expressed using video projectors for educational purposes (FI14; FI15 2015), watching videos and making shadow theatre (FI13, 2015).

Following the data from the inquiries, the Finnish trainers seemed to use mobile phones in their work more than their counterparts in Brazil, but this might be a result of the fact that this specific question was modified a little in the inquiry given to the Finnish trainers. Almost all the trainers announced that they take pictures and videos with their mobile phones from the activities and post them online. The trainers in Finland and Brazil use media as part of the activities for several reasons (see later Table 2, p.53). When talking about Internet in general in the context of media use in the social circus activities, finding music from YouTube was one of the most popular activity in both countries, and Facebook was one of the most used social platforms.

In both countries social media was used by the trainers mostly before or after the actual social circus lessons/workshops. Trainers used different social media mainly for communication; keeping in contact with other practitioners, informing the parents of the participants, et cetera. The next most popular activity in social media varied; in Brazil it was marketing the activities of social circus and in Finland research (mostly for educational purposes). Brazilians reported research (mostly for informational and educational purposes), being the third most important activity in social media and Internet, when for Finnish trainers it was marketing.

In this study, the *communicational media use* (see later p.53) in social circus activities is considered to follow Carey’s idea about communication as culture (see Carey, 2009). When the participants or trainers are promoting the activities of social circus in their personal social networks (digital and/or in real life) they are not just trying to promote their own personal success, or share their experiences. They do it also for the continuity of the activities, where they are celebrating their belonging together (f. ex. Carey 2009; personal conversations with the professionals of social circus at the international social circus seminars in Finland, Netherlands and Belgium 2009–2016).

Movies and games were used in the activities of social circus by the trainers mostly in Brazil. In both countries some trainers used movies and games as a source of new ideas and for to stimulate the participants (BR2; BR8; FI12; FI13, 2015). According to one Brazilian trainer movies are used for example to get the participants interested in other art forms, but also the content of the film is sometimes discussed together with the participants (BR5, 2015). Also watching sports was mentioned as one way to get new ideas for the social circus activities (BR7, 2015). In Finland movies and games were used also with the intention for "to learn new tricks myself" (FI14, 2015). One Brazilian trainer underlined that these contents were not used "Because I do not have the access to videos that could help me to plan the activities" (BR7, 2015).

When talking about participants' Internet use in the activities of social circus, there occurred some variation due to the fact that this question was modified a little to the inquiries that were in Finnish. The Brazilian trainers announced that the participants are using Internet as part of the activities, in Finland Internet was also used but the inquiries revealed that it was mostly used by mobile phone. Following the trainers, in both countries YouTube and Facebook were used for "research, improving and learning" (BR6, 2015).

According to the findings of this study there occurred quite a lot of mobile use among both, the trainers and the participants, in Brazil and in Finland. Trainers from both countries reported that both, participants and themselves take pictures and videos from the activities and post them to Internet. The main reasons why participants were doing this was according to the trainers mainly self-evaluation and learning. The participants were posting the pictures and/or videos to Internet, mainly to Facebook and YouTube. According to the trainers the main reasons for the participants to post the pictures to Internet was that they were proud of what they were doing, and wanted to share the things they have learned. One trainer from Brazil added "And to feel to be included to the society" (BR2, 2015; see also Ceccon, 2009). One trainer from Finland (FI15, 2015) considered as the reason for participants not taking pictures or videos during the lessons to be because they are not allowed to use the mobile phones during the activities.

One of the interviewees from Brazil was concerned about the way the participants were using social media; they might be showing, and giving instructions to circus tricks online without understanding that somebody could get hurt (BR16, 2016).

When talking about the professional media and the participants, one of the trainers from Brazil announced that “It’s part of the objectives of the institution to make the student to be able to express and defend their ideals, no matter if they are talking in the ring, or with friends or being interviewed by a stranger– “. (BR5, 2015; see also Kinnunen et. al. 2013). Trainers expressed that the professional media has mainly had a good effect on the participants. One trainer from Finland added that if the participants are going to have their picture taken, or they are aware that their actions are being recorded, they focus more on the activities (FI18, 2016). Among the interviewed trainers there existed a fear concerning the media use in even in educational manner, as part of the social circus activities. Some trainers worried that if the participants will see something ”super cool”, and they ”lack the sense of reality”, it might actually cause depression among them because they are not able to perform similarly (FI19, 2016). Using the Internet during the social circus activities was seen as kind of a threat to the circus activities itself, because it was considered that the participants would get more interested in the ”wonderful world of world wide web” and could ”get stuck” there (citings FI19; also BR11, 2016).

4.2 Eight different themes for media use in social circus

According to Hasebrink (2012) three main aspects can identify media use: 1. Conditions (technical reach and access), 2. Practice (usage and selection) and 3. Meanings (reception/interaction and appropriation). In accordance with him the selection processes –why people use different media– belong under the definition of practices of media use (Hasebrink, 2012, 382-383). In this study, the selection was studied together with the meanings for media use following Hasebrink’s idea of meanings of media use, why/for what media is used and what kind of effects it has (see Hasebrink 2012). Eight themes for media use were formed following the study data concerning the media use in social circus activities in Finland and in Brazil. These themes were; promoting, marketing, research, learning, teaching, informing, communicating and support. The table next page (Table 2) demonstrates some examples of what kind of media use each of these themes include when the whole study data is considered; qualitative inquiry, participatory observations and personal thematic interviews.

Next I will demonstrate the eight different themes of media use in social circus activities that were abstracted to three main themes of media use in this same context. These themes are not in any specific order nor do they have strict boundaries in relation to each other.

Communicational media use in the activities of social circus

COMMUNICATING

- *Trainers keeping contact to participants, colleagues and collaboratives, sharing their knowledge.
- *Participants using Whatsapp during the lesson, or mediated talk to start a conversation.

PROMOTING

- *Trainers trying to find participants for the activities.
- *Participants promoting their own success in social media.

MARKETING

- *Trainers trying to find investors for the activities or new partners to work with.
- *Participants marketing the final show to their friends.

Educational media use in the activities of social circus

RESEARCH

- *Trainers finding information about circus props, the history of different disciplines, social circus, et cetera.
- *Participants finding information about tricks and disciplines on the Internet.

LEARNING

- *Trainers educating themselves with videos, or other material found online, or in other media.
- *Participants learning tricks from videos.

TEACHING

- *Trainers showing videos of certain tricks or even whole circus acts for the participants.
- *Participants show what they can do with their mobiles. They show their expertise in media contents and in technical media skills.

Supportive media use in the activities of social circus

INFORMING

- *Signs on the walls.
- *Informative leaflets concerning different topics are given to the participants.

SUPPORT

- *Media (music, video, or other media material as a background during the lessons and/or final shows).
- *Participants use media to remember things.

Table 2. The three main themes for media use.

These eight themes for media use were abstracted to three main themes according to their main purpose, or quality; *communicational*, *educational* or *supportive* media use. These three themes are considered here to be the main themes for media use in social circus activities. The content of each theme differs a little depending on if the user is a trainer or a participant. This is considered to be an outcome of the different role that the social circus trainer has when compared to the participant.

In communicational media use (promoting, marketing, and communicating) there occurs interpersonal communication between people and/or different kinds of messages are transmitted. It is important to take into account that today communication is considered to be much more than just transmitting messages or signals. Carey separates communication into two different views; ritual view of communication which is directed “toward the maintenance of a society in time”, and transmission view of communication which is directed towards “transmission of signals or messages over distance for the purpose of control” (Carey 2009, 11-27).

Carey reminds about the link between the words ‘communication’ and ‘community’ (Carey 2009, 103). In the context of media use in social circus activities the “communicational media use” leans on Carey’s thought of communication; because marketing and promoting are the actions needed to maintain the activities and therefore can also be seen as a way to maintain a community.

In this case educational media use (research, learning, and teaching) includes all the learning-related media use concerning the activities of social circus, whether the learner is the participant or the trainer. Supportive media use is more challenging to define due to its complexity; it can be anything from using music that supports the activities by helping, stimulating and/or supporting the participants’ performance, to informative signs on the walls.

4.3 Different kinds of media use

According to the findings of this comparative case study the media is used in the activities of social circus in many different ways, and there seems to be even planned media pedagogical aspects in the activities of social circus.

In Tampere the trainers were not using any media equipment or contents like YouTube during the activities, but the participants were using mobile phones for several things, even when they were instructed not to use them during the activities. In Sorin Sirkus the trainers barely used their mobile

phones during the lessons. One explanation given by an informant (FI19, 2016) from Sorin Sirkus was, that most of the administrative tasks that demand communicating with the groups belong to other people than trainers.

The study data revealed that in Casa de Cultura e Cidadania in Novo Hamburgo, where the trainers were given in advance the instructions to only use radio in their work (BR16 and BR17, 2016) their personal laptops were important tools for them (BR17, 2016). Trainers told that the center had only one laptop. The trainers used often their personal laptop for example to show videos of certain techniques to the participants. The instructions for the children were that no mobile phones are allowed, but according to the trainers it was very complicated to enforce this rule "because we live in a digital ivy, we live in a digital age" (BR16, 2016). According to the trainers from Novo Hamburgo they use mobile phones for example to remember things; by taking pictures from different circus acts when they were preparing for the final shows (BR16 and BR17, 2016).

When talking about the participants, according to the observations, the participants in Finland used media equipment during the circus activities (mostly mobile phones, but also a digital camera) much more than their counterparts in Brazil. The participants in Finland were taking pictures from themselves during the lessons. This behaviour did not exist in Brazil. According to some of the Finnish participants, they post the pictures to the Internet mainly for others to see what they are doing, and for safe keeping. "But I can! I did not even remember that I filmed that!" said one participant in the middle of her staff training session in Sorin Sirkus, when she was wondering about how a certain trick is done. From her mobile phone she found a video that was filmed earlier, and she could see that she had already managed to do that trick once (personal observation notes, 23.9.2015).

The Finnish observation groups that included young adults, used a lot of mediated talk during the lessons. They were talking about films they had seen, about their mobile phones and games et cetera. According to the informant FI18 (2016) there are some participants that could talk throughout the lesson about digital games. However, this behavior is not encouraged, but instead they try to get the participants to participate on the social circus activities itself (FI18, 2016). According to the observations, in Finland the participants used their mobile phones during the activities (from glimpsing at one's phone, to answering phone calls and filming videos), but trainers did not use any accessible media technologies at all. The thematic personal interviews revealed that there exists an interest towards media use in the social circus activities in Sorin Sirkus, and in the near future they have planned to use more media in their work (FI18, 2016).

According to the observations, in Novo Hamburgo the focus of the speech among the participants concentrated on daily life, and the activities of social circus. Once a girl asked during the activities whether I watched Brazilian "novelas". That was the only mediated speech that was encountered during the observations, and it was targeted at me. Following the trainers from Casa de Cultura e Cidadania the children came to every lesson with some media related content in mind (BR16, 2016), so there might have been some mediated talk that was not heard, or understood by the observer due to linguistic challenges. Also the fact that the observation groups in Novo Hamburgo included 25 up to 40 children and young people caused some challenges for hearing.

In Tampere, at Sorin Sirkus, when talking about the social circus activities, it seemed that the trainers tried to prevent especially young children from using mobile phones during the activities of social circus because otherwise "they do not focus on the things we are trying to teach" (FI18, 2016). Other informant said that in social circus groups there is a more considerable risk that they start using media outside the given context, but according to the same informant some social circus groups could benefit substantially from media use (FI19, 2016). The same was also mentioned by the trainers from Novo Hamburgo; there exists a danger that for example the mobile phone ends up being more interesting than the trainer, but on the other hand there might be a need for a specific media in the social circus activities (BR16, 2016).

In Novo Hamburgo at Casa de Cultura e Cidadania mobile phones were used by the trainers mostly for connecting with different people involved with the project, and for trying to get financial, and other help with the project. According to the interviewed trainers, the participants were sometimes using mobile phones to take pictures when they were doing circus to learn about their body postures but otherwise the use was limited. During observations it was not registered that the participants in Brazil were taking any pictures or videos of themselves during the activities. According to the other interviewed trainer from Novo Hamburgo it does not benefit the teaching anyway if the participants would be taking pictures from themselves during the lessons. According to him the participants themselves would like to take pictures during the lessons, but if they are encouraged to do that after the lesson, or during a break, the participants are not interested in taking the pictures anymore (BR16, 2016).

According to the findings music was used during the lessons mostly in Brazil. At this point it is necessary to point out, like one of the interviewed trainers from Novo Hamburgo (BR17, 2016) did, that the groups were observed in a middle of a project where they mixed dance and circus. In Finland

music seemed to be used only in final shows. According to one of the interviewed trainers from Sorin Sirkus music is used sometimes for a change "without any deeper thinking" (FI18, 2016). According to the other people interviewed, the pedagogical reasons for using music as part of the activities of social circus in Sorin Sirkus were mainly supportive by "giving a rhythm and feeling to the act; to help the performer to adapt moods and support performing" (FI19, 2016).

4.3.1 Media pedagogical aspects

When comparing these two cases, Sorin Sirkus in Tampere, Finland, and Casa de Cultura e Cidadania in Novo Hamburgo, Brazil the pedagogical aspect for using media was more visible in the case of Novo Hamburgo, Brazil. One must remember that when talking about media education Buckingham considers that it is important that media education is not confused with teaching "through" or "with" media (Buckingham 2003, 4). In practice, teaching about media and teaching through media often interlace and that is why according to others the so-called educational media can also be included into the field of media education (Kupiainen, Sintonen & Suoranta, 2007, 7).

One time in Casa de Cultura e Cidadania in Novo Hamburgo, before the final performance when the boys were not happy to perform in tights, the trainer wanted to show them on his laptop an act from one of the shows of Cirque du Soleil to demonstrate that 'real men', real circus stars, wear tights. Unfortunately, the Internet connection failed at that very moment they had gathered in front of the laptop so that time the trainer's pedagogical intention was interrupted by the failure of the 'access' (see f.ex. Hasebrink 2012). The idea of 'real men' comes from home, often from Brazilian TV (see f. ex. Wilska & Pedrozo 2007) so therefore this kind of intention from the trainer can be considered to be media pedagogical (see Qvortrup, 2007). An interviewee from Novo Hamburgo remarked though that it had taken four years from them as trainers to get to that point where they were now; that they were able to use media in their work. First they had to work with "thousands of other things" like the participants' behavior; being nice to others, being careful with circus props, their social skills, et cetera (BR16, 2016).

In Finland the media use had other pedagogical aspects; according to one informant from Sorin Sirkus they once had challenges explaining to one social circus group how they should perform on stage so they filmed their performance so that the participants would see themselves performing. According to the informant the result was very good; the participants understood that if they for example do not look at audience at all, it looks funny (FI19, 2016).

In Brazil, social circus was also used *as* a media. Sometimes in the ring of departure the participants were given leaflets to take home with them. These leaflets (media texts) mainly contained information about different health related issues like promoting vaccination, preventing domestic violence, et cetera. According to Bergsma this kind of activity is linked to the media literacy (see Bergsma 2011).

One peculiarity that concerned Brazil was the `uniform` that the participants were wearing during the activities; they all had matching T-shirts. According to the interviewee BR17 T-shirts were used to achieve a feeling for a belonging to a group (BR17, 2016; see also Carey, 2009). This can be seen as a way of communication too (Carey 2009).

According to the trainers from Novo Hamburgo, the participants were not distracted by the media technologies like Notebook for example. Following the trainers, rural children in Brazil do not have access to this type of content so using a computer/laptop is also a way for opening the world for them, so that they can get to know other people and see: "Look, you can. Yes, if these people have had success you can also succeed" (BR16, 2016). But according to the interviewed people it demands a good sense (BR17, 2016), "because the network has a lot of good, but it also has a lot of complicated aspects" (BR16 2016). In Brazil they were also trying to show different kinds of cultures to the participants by using different kinds of music; something that they can not see or hear on the Brazilian TV (more in next chapter) (BR16 and BR17, 2016). The media contents that they use in the activities, like music et cetera, are those which the children and young people do not confront much. Trainers expressed that the Brazilian media is showing a lot of inappropriate media content, and the media is mainly targeted at the masses, so only the popular culture is presented by media. According to the interviewed BR17 the objective is to show to the participants also "another kind of world" (BR17, 2016).

When comparing these two cases, in Tampere there did not seem to exist pedagogical use of media in the same quantity that in Novo Hamburgo.

4.4 Mapping the results

These two case studies revealed some similarities, but also great differences, concerning the media use in social circus activities in these two countries, Finland and Brazil. One of the biggest differences between these two cases when the content of social circus lessons is concerned was that in Casa de Cultura e Cidadania in Novo Hamburgo, the trainers did not use the so-called warm-up, or other real life games at all. The focus there was more in circus disciplines, and dance. At Sorin Sirkus in Tampere real life games were partly mediated by having some elements from the media culture. (For example the James Bond figure in a grouping game called "Monkey-Gorilla-Elephant" where the participants have to form different pre-decided figures when told to do so).

According to the observations in both locations, Novo Hamburgo and Tampere, the trainers talked about social media to the participants on occasion. According to the inquiries, trainers from both countries seem to think that there is a place for media among social circus activities. According to some respondents, media could be used as another kind of tool for participation. Following some trainers, participants who are more interested about media, could make videos, music or other media related things according to their own interest, and participate in this fashion in the activities of social circus (f.ex. FI18, 2016).

According to the findings, the social circus groups might also benefit from exposing their skills for example in social media. The participants could (according to the trainers) "get a voice", "be heard and participate in discussions" which "might courage them for example to civic engagement". Most of the trainees who participated in this study expressed that there had been some professional interest towards social circus from the field of professional media, and that it had mostly positive effects on the participants, but there were also participants that did not want to be shown in public media.

When talking about media devices, in both cases the study data revealed that the trainers were concerned that if the participants would be using mobile phones during the activities of social circus it would be disruptive and could end up being more interesting than the teacher. In Novo Hamburgo there was also concern that because there was no safe place for the phones, they might get stolen, or children would break their phones during the activities. "Sometimes there is a good reason for letting the participants use the phones as cameras to see their own achievements, but most of the time we are

trying to focus on other things, like participation for example” (FI18, 2016).

According to the observations of this study, media really is present today also in the activities of social circus; in clothing, speech, face-to-face gaming et cetera. In Finland, which is known from its technological opportunities, the use of media equipment *during* the activities of the social circus by the trainers (when having access to the equipment) seemed to be almost non-existent according to the whole study data. In Novo Hamburgo, for example music from the Internet was used during the lessons, not just in the final shows, and computer was used during the lessons for different reasons. Of course, we have to keep in mind that these activities in Brazil which were observed, also included dance, and circus was practiced in the same space, so all the participants heard the music even though it was targeted only at the dancers practicing a certain coreography to a certain song. Following the interviews, in Sorin Sirkus there was only a little use of the media by the trainers concerning the social circus lessons in general. In general, according to the inquiry, in Finland the social circus trainers were using media for social circus related reasons mainly before or after the lessons. They used media mostly for educational or communicational reasons.

It is important to keep in mind that in both countries there are several different organizations and private organizers that practice social circus, so the realities can vary considerably. In Finland, according to the inquiries, some of the trainers of social circus use media also for communicational reasons (promoting, et cetera). It is necessary to mention at this point that couple of trainers from both countries announced in the inquiries, that there is no media technology to be used, or no acces to one.

I observed that in Brazil, the trainers sometimes called other people during the lessons in order to get help with the project, or they were contacting the participants’ families for different reasons. There were administrative personnel at Casa de Cultura e Cidadania also, like in Sorin Sirkus, but the trainers in Novo Hamburgo seemed to be assisting the administrative personnel in solving problems concerning the project together also during the lessons.

4.5 Future aspects concerning the media use

One of the informants from Brazil announced that media is already part of social circus “through open media” (BR16, 2016) so it is necessary to start contemplating the future of media use in social circus activities. According to the inquiries and interviews, there was interest among the trainers in

both countries towards some kind of a national database, “where the work done could be registered” (BR16, 2016) and /or “a website or an online library which could have supply or information on all form of research and reference” (BR9, 2015). In general, according to the inquiries, media could be part of the social circus activities in the future for example, by using more music and videos during the classes. Skyping with other social circus groups was seen as one option for the future media use in the activities of social circus (BR16, 2016).

There were also some ideas about making use of the media related talents that the participants already had; like making and editing videos, composing music, et cetera, the knowledge and skills they already had to support their participation in the activities of social circus. Media was considered in the future, according to the answers from the inquiries, to be useful for example as a tool for making notes and for recording the successes, but it was also considered “to make the field of social circus to be more transparent in a positive light” (FI15, 2016).

According to the Brazilian trainers it would benefit the participants, if media would be used in the activities of social circus in a manner that the participants “would get much more involved with the activities, and with the artistic knowledge, because the modern media (smartphones and the Internet) is more capable and effective in transmitting information to the students” (BR16, 2016). It was also mentioned that “from the moment when there will be more promotion and more recognition of the work, it can make the growth and continuity of the institution possible” (BR5, 2015). According to the Finnish trainers using media in the activities of social circus

”could help in seeing what possibilities there are and what is happening elsewhere. Maybe that could encourage for trying, daring to try new things. For some expressing yourself through pictures, videos or music can be a natural way, and therefore encouraging them to use social media could help in that [sic].”

(FI10, 2016).

Despite the fact that there were trainers that were of the opinion that using media might make the activities of social circus “more versatile and would highlight the multi-artistic side of circus” (FI15, 2016) there were also countering opinions that reminded that “Life is full of technology, so it is good for now and then just be without the gadgets and media, and focus on the activities and people themselves!” (FI11, 2016). When talking about teaching and learning, following some informants from both countries “the media is very efficient, but in the social circus there is a need for direct speech”. (BR16, 2016). Also a lot of other professionals in the field of social circus seem to think that

social circus is more about being together, grouping, participating and socializing with each other than operating with media production, products or devices (personal discussions with professionals of social circus around the world in seminars in Brazil, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Belgium and Finland during 2013–2016; also FI18, 2016). In Finland for example, according to this study data, mobile phones are already so present in everyday life, that to some of the participants the activities of the social circus can be the only way to ‘forget’ the phone. In both countries there existed concern whether the media should be mixed with the social circus activities at all. But also some new ideas for using media in the activities were expressed. For example, the media use was considered to reinforce participation (f. ex. FI18, 2016).

Journalists writing stories or making programmes about social circus was considered as having mainly positive effects on participants. Brazilian trainers reported that it had enhanced participants’ inclusion and self esteem; and even if there would have been initial fear, there had also been excitement among them about promoting the activities and expressing themselves. Following one Brazilian trainer, the participants also got “More interested about media” (BR2, 2015) and according to the same informant participants “feel included to the society as persons [sic] who can make a difference” (BR2, 2015) due to the interaction with professional journalists. In the inquiries the Finnish trainers did not answer this question at all. One of the interviewees from Sorin Sirkus (FI18, 2016) expressed that there were participants that did not want to be seen in media at all; if there was professional media present, these participants started to act as if they were not there. They tried to avoid ending up in media.

5 EVALUATING THE STUDY

In qualitative research the data collection and analysis are seen as simultaneous activity (Merriam, 1988, 119). In this study mixed methods were used for trying to find out the “truth”, or at least to get very near to the foundations concerning the media use in the social circus activities. By using a qualitative inquiry and personal interviews together with participatory observations the attempt was to assure that a certain depth would be achieved concerning the media use in the activities of social circus in Brazil and in Finland. According to Yin, in case study the development of theory can be seen prior to the collection of case study data (Yin, 1994, 28). Flygvjberg reminds that one of the misunderstandings concerning conducting a case study is that general, theoretical (context-independent) knowledge is considered to be more valuable than concrete, practical (context-dependent) knowledge (Flygvjberg 2006, 221).

This qualitative comparative case study was conducted using multiple sources of evidence to enhance the validity and reliability of the study. A case study database was formed. Objective of the study protocol was, that if someone else were to conduct this same comparative case study following the same procedures, she would arrive at the same conclusions (see Yin 1994, 36-37). The anonymity of the people who participated in this study was guaranteed by my own ethical protocol. All the inquiries that were in Portuguese were seen only by me and my translators after the trainers had answered them. The translators had no possibility to recognize the participants from the inquiries, because the translators lived in different states than the people who answered to the inquiry and translators were not familiar with the field of circus in Brazil.

Mason reflects that there are three criterias for validity of noticing, which according to him are the “resonance with past experience, making new sense with that past experience and informing the future---“(Mason 2002, 92). Of course, noticing involves stressing some features and ignoring others (see Mason 2002, 148) and it is not something a researcher does at a conscious level in the moment at hand. It is said that a researcher can work to try to enhance noticing but this can be seen only as preparation. (Mason 2002, 244).

5.1 Challenges with conducting this study

Completing a comparative case study which involves two different nations is not easy. Having a partner when conducting this study might have given more depth to the study (see Livingstone 2012, 417), even though according to Pathak-Shelat et. al. there is a limited scope for in-depth reporting when the study samples include more than one nation (Pathak-Shelat, Kotilainen & Hirsijärvi, 2015, 391). In this kind of study there is also an existing risk that the Western theories might be incompatible especially with Brazil (see Custódio 2015, 136). And like mentioned, it is unlikely that all the factors (political, economic, cultural, technical, et cetera) which according to Hasenbrink (2012) explain media use, can be implemented in a single research (see Hasebrink 2012).

Some of the challenges were geographical. The size of Finland is 338 424 km² and the size of Brazil is 8 516 000 km². That did not present limitations only for traveling. Size of the state, Rio Grande do Sul, where the observations were conducted is 281 748 km² (which is almost the same as Finland) but the amount of inhabitants was in 2014 more than twice the amount of people living in Finland. According to Livingstone it can be problematic to define the status of the nation itself as the unit of comparative research. Shifting the unit from nation to a region, according to her does not solve the problem. (Livingstone 2012, 423).

5.1.1 Organizational challenges

At the beginning of my exchange studies in Brazil, in March 2015, I attended in a seminar in Campinas to explore the Brazilian reality in the field of social circus. I knew that there would be a lot of professionals of social circus all over Brazil participating in this seminar. I considered preparing some interviews, besides giving the inquiry to the participants of the seminar. I was well prepared and had contacted the organizers of the seminar beforehand, so everything seemed to be in order. The schedule at the Brazilian seminar was very tight, and quite soon I understood that due to the transportations, there would not be a separate time for the people to answer the inquiries at all, and there would definitely be no time for any official interviews. The papers were silently handed to the trainers during the speeches. I noticed while observing that the trainers were filling the inquiries with intent even though I was initially concerned that they would not focus due to the speeches. On the other hand, it would have been better to give them their own time and space for answering, but due to the circumstances there was no other option. I could not take the chance that I would send them the questions via e-mail and then wait for the answers. I needed the answers with me for the translation

process. In the end, I think I got better results because people did not have the time to think so much of how to answer in order to please me. I think that they were reflecting their own reality the best way they could within the given time frame. For me it seemed that during those personal contacts I had with them later, they were really appreciative of the fact that someone showed interest towards their work.

One of the inquiries was given at the Brazilian conference to a person whom I would really have wanted to be part of this research due to her own past. She gave the paper to the girl sitting next to her. I did not want to put pressure on her by asking why she did this. There is always a possibility that she did not know how to read, or write (see Wilska & Pedrozo 2007, 348–351). She seemed to be really focused on the seminar, so I thought that distracting her with my inquiry would maybe just be annoying for her and therefore it would not help my study. She would have probably answered shortly, or not at all, just because of her own annoyance. Of course this is my own interpretation, but I think that as a researcher you sometimes have to trust your own feelings, especially when there are people involved. I considered it to be a good idea to hand the inquiry personally to the trainers participating to the seminar in Campinas, even though it meant traveling over 1000 kilometers one way. By introducing myself personally and talking a little with the people, I made them realize what I am doing and why, which seemed to make them more relaxed. They were also able to see how much I appreciated their effort for my study, and I was able to thank them all face-to-face.

I decided to conduct the observations in Rio Grande do Sul because the state is similar in its size to Finland, and the economic situation is better there than in the Northern Brazil. I thought that if there would not exist media use in the activities of social circus in a Brazilian state that is said to have more money than other states, there would not be media use in the poorer states either. Later the greatest reason for me choosing this area was, that I had already established a connection to the local Casa de Cultura e Cidadania in Novo Hamburgo, so I was worried that going to some other part of Brazil would actually end up being a disaster for my study due to communication, or other time-consuming challenges.

Participatory observation is said to involve great challenges especially concerning the role of the observer. Following Yin it is not necessarily good for the research if the researcher has to take advocacy roles, she becomes a supporter of the group or organization being studied, or if the role of the participant requires too much attention when comparing to the role of the observer. (Yin, 1994, 89). In this study these trade-offs were considered seriously when conducting the observations. Of

course, the fact that the informants were unaware of the real content of the study can be seen as ethically problematic, but like Alasuutari remarks, if the respondents are not told about the exact purpose of the research, their answers can be considered to be more valid (Alasuutari 2011, 97). In this specific study, being too clear with the research intentions might have resulted in the results being unreliable (see Hirsijärvi & Hurme, 1991, 18) because the informants might have deduced that their answers might lead to certain results; they might have hidden or overstated their use of the media.

According to Rössler language can be a major obstacle to equivalency, which according to him is the key concept for cross-cultural content analysis (Rössler 2012, 460-463). Later, when my own Portuguese skills got better I noticed small flaws in the inquiry. The English version was more prompt and specific than the Portuguese one. I still consider these to be minor flaws in translation which did not have significant impact on the way the questions were perceived. People also understand things differently. From the answers I could see that the questions were understood as they were intended to be. Following Rössler, for sufficient semantic validity a mere dictionary based correct translation is not enough because the meaning is more important for equivalency than conversion (Rössler 2012, 465). When considering the integrity of this study, especially when talking about the inquiry, expected results were attained and some unexpected matters exposed. This comparative case study brings out information that has not been under a scrutiny before; how media is used in the activities of social circus.

5.1.2 Solving the linguistic challenges

It is said that to be able to collect the right information from another culture one should be able to recognize 70% of the cultural factors in addition to the spoken language. (Personal notes from the international Culture has an impact –seminar, Tampere, Finland 2009, source unknown). People can also give the same things different meanings from culture to another, but also within different cultures (Eskola & Suoranta, 2005, 45) and that makes all research problematic. Especially when conducting a study in different cultures, as a non-native, there is a risk that the researcher and the respondent do not understand each other (Hirsijärvi & Hurme 1991, 48).

When conducting this study the inquiries were translated into Finnish and Portuguese so that the informants, to have an equal status as informants, would be able to answer in their native languages. At this point it is important to remember that in Brazil the groups that were under observation, were sometimes three to four times bigger than in Finland, so it was quite challenging

to hear and understand all the talk due to the extra noise.

Surveys, or in this case inquiries, including several languages usually produce a source in one language which is then translated after an ASQ (=ask the same question) design. According to Harkness, the suitability of the source questions together with the translations or adaptations used to determine the success or failure of this approach (Harkness, 2012, 448). In this study translation-back-translation procedure was used to control the peculiarities of language (see Hanitzhs & Esser 2012, 505).

Preparation of the inquiry was challenging, because it was challenging to find Brazilians who would speak and understand English well enough to translate the inquiry, especially for free. Because I am neither native in English nor in Portuguese myself, it made the whole translating process more challenging. In the end we managed to form the questions so that they were easy to understand the way they were meant to be understood. In order to do this in a linguistically proper way, two different Brazilian translators were used. The final translator of the Portuguese inquiry, Andre Garcia, had a really good impact on it by making it linguistically clear and therefore easier for the people to answer. It must be reminded though that the translators, Andre Garcia and Ricardo Müller were native in Portuguese, but not professional translators. Luis Antônio Soares took care of of the final transcription of the interviews that were in Portuguese.

The interviews were conducted without a translator, but the transcribing was done by a native. Despite my specific instructions, the first person who did the transcribing (her work was not used in the analysis at all) did not write everything down exactly how it was said, so eventually I ended up using another person to be sure that the transcribing was done well enough.

5.1.3 Forming the questions

Forming an inquiry is not an easy task (see Mason 2002, 156-157) partly because an inquiry can reveal what the people think, but it does not tell how things really are in real life (Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 212). It is also unclear if the respondents will understand the questions in the same way the researcher intended, or if the ready-made answer options will reach the worldview or the respondents' way of thinking. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 1991, 16). Pre-testing the inquiry might have provided some missing cultural insights (see Harkness 2012, 449) but it could have also been a mistake to assume that a question type or format that worked well for Finnish people would automatically work well for

Brazilians (see Harkness 2012, 451). It is possible that even cross-national research projects end up universalizing. That can be the result especially because similarities seem to be easier to observe and observed differences can be difficult to explain theoretically. (Livingstone 2012, 420-421).

Two or three different ‘final’ versions of the inquiry were made (appendix 1) to make sure that the “right” questions would be asked. The questions were left as open as possible to get valid information. The idea was not to lead trainers with the questions, so that they would not give answers they thought that I was after. A lot of structured ‘yes or no’ questions (where you basically just mark your answer quickly without a need to write anything) were used, but there were also some open questions where the trainers had the chance to reflect their own experiences. There was a chance that those open questions in the inquiry would have been left totally unanswered. This problem was solved by using a lot of ‘why’ -questions, thus attempting to make the trainers rationalize their answer. According to Alasuutari by using different question patterns in a research it is possible to obtain information that can be considered to be reliable if the source criticism does not indicate otherwise. (Alasuutari 2011, 110-111).

At first I did not think that the age or sex of the people participating in this study would be significant in relation to the research problem itself, so first questions related to these aspects were left out from the inquiry in Portuguese. Later that information was asked orally from the informants at the moment when the inquiries were handed back. Even though this study is not based on the division of age or gender in any means, it is important to know the average age and gender of the people who answer to the questions. This information might also be statistically useful later.

For the inquiry in Finnish the question concerning the participants’ Internet use in the activities was modified so that the answers would tell more about which medium was used, computer, mobile phone or other, and also the question concerning the informant’s age was added. In the inquiry, the trainers were asked to add their email addresses just in case there would be difficulties understanding their handwriting. By doing this, a later contact for further discussion with them would also be possible. The email address is the only way the informants could be recognized from the inquiries.

5.1.4 Challenges in explaining media

Conceptualising what *is* media is difficult, because the current term includes so many different kinds of media products, mediums and so on (f. ex. Potter 2014). There is also the difficult question of what should be included in media and what should be excluded, as sometimes happens when people are defining what is social circus. It would probably have been more productive in some terms of research to define more strictly the definition of media and media use in this specific study, but when studying a phenomenon that has not been studied before, like media use in the activities of social circus, it was thought that it is better not to define media strictly at this point. This approach was chosen to encourage the informants to use their own conceptualization of media to get versatile answers. This allowed the informants to mention certain unexpected issues. According to Messenger (2010) media have to be defined in the broadest possible sense especially when children are concerned (Messenger 2010, 14).

The questions used should encourage personal opinions and commentary (Brennen 2013, 33), so therefore in this study the term media refers extensively to all imaginable media (see Scolari 2016). Figuratively speaking it could be said that here some road signs were built without writing exactly where the roads finally lead. Of course there exists the danger, that instead of stimulating their thinking the informants would be left bewildered, or disconcerted. But this did not show in the findings. Also, defining media strictly beforehand would have demanded such presumptions concerning the media use in the activities of social circus, that it was thought that those presumptions could lead to unreliable or at least shallow research results.

In this study the term ‘activities of social circus’ include the social circus lessons, or workshops, and everything that is related to the activities of social circus when trainers are concerned; planning, organizing and conducting the lessons and the final shows. Media use in this study contains the use of all imaginable media; like Internet, social media, music, video, mass media (TV, radio, newspapers) and the use of mobile phones and other the media devices (like computers or projectors) et cetera as part of the activities of social circus (see Scolari 2016).

5.2 *Other comments*

In general, making the familiar strange and by bringing to “the surface implicit assumptions or perspectives” can be one outcome of a research (Mason 2002, 157). Following Mason in qualitative research –especially when researching from the inside– the effect of the research is more important than its validity (Mason 2002, 229). According to the findings, there were some questions among the trainers about media’s role in the activities of social circus. Some of the trainers from both countries who participated in this study, expressed that they had not been thinking before to use media as a tool to get the participants more involved to the activities, so in that sense this research has basically fulfilled its purpose by stimulating their thinking (see Mason 2002, 229).

Harkness reminds, that it is necessary to keep in mind that respondents can also mistakenly believe that their answers can lead to an actual change in their life (Harkness, 2012, 449). In this case it would mean, for example, that the social circus trainers might say that they would use media, but do not have the equipment, just to attain new gadgets. Following the personal interviews the trainers in Novo Hamburgo were using media more diversely, than was actually observed. But in this case the explanation might be that they were observed during that time of the year when they were mostly focusing on their final show. So this means that their procedures and actions might differ from the normal training.

When talking about the personal interviews, it might have been better to let the interviewees see the questions beforehand for to stimulate their thinking. By doing so, they might have been able to illuminate on their media use in social circus activities in a more profound way. Anyway, I am satisfied how the informants interpreted the questions.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The activities of social circus can open the participants' world view in many ways; they learn about themselves when practicing circus arts for example when achieving something they thought was impossible for them. By meeting other people, trainers and other participants, they can learn about different ways of living. Potter reminds that "We all live in two worlds: the real world and the media world" (Potter 2014, 150). In social circus activities the real world is always present because the activities encompass interaction between real people. Participation is one of the key elements of social circus activities, and following the findings of this study, media is used in the activities but could be used in an even more profound way for example to enhance participation. There was some concern though that the media itself (for example the mobile phone, social media and Internet) might end up being more interesting than the actual social circus activities.

There are several aspects that can define media use, and those aspects basically identify different areas of research (Hasebrink 2012; Potter 2014; Scolari 2016; Buckingham 2003; Carey 2009). In this study, the focus was in how and why media is used in the activities of social circus in Finland and in Brazil. Hasebrink's (2012) definitions concerning media use (see f.ex. Hasebrink, 2012, 38) were used as guidelines when studying, analyzing and explaining the media use in this context. According to the findings of this study, despite of the fact that the conditions for media use (see f.ex. Hasebrink 2012; Ray 2010; Custódio 2015) in the activities of social circus vary, not just between these two countries but also within the countries, media is used in the activities of social circus for communicational, educational and supportive reasons. Following the findings, in the context of the activities of social circus media is used by both, the trainers and the participants. Their media use has different dimensions and meanings (see Hasebrink 2012), but three different themes were identified following the purpose of media use. Meanings for the media use (see Hasebrink 2012) were communicational, educational and supportive. There were also media pedagogical elements related to the media use in the social circus activities.

Social circus activities enhance participation and encourage communication. The activities of social circus follow the socio-cultural idea of communication where communication is not seen just as transmitting signals or messages over distances, but also as a way to maintain a community (Carey 2009). We also use different medias to communicate. Following the findings, media was used outside the actual lessons/workshops by the trainers mainly for communicational reasons but there were also elements of educational media use. In both countries media is used during the lessons/workshops for educational reasons and to support the activities.

Due to the fact that media is ever-present (see f.ex. Potter 2014) we must start to think about the pedagogical possibilities for media use in the activities of social circus. Media literacy is said to be one of the most important skills needed today (f. ex. Potter 2014), and it can affect different areas of life (see f. ex. Bergsma 2011). Today people living in different social, political, economical, and cultural surroundings share at least one thing, they all are exposed to some media.

6.1 Media use in different realities

In Brazil, among the adolescents aged 15 to 17, almost 15 % are out of school which means more than 1.5 million adolescents in total. Especially for the children in the poorest and most difficult situations it can be difficult to gain access to the basics such as food, clothing and shelter (Ray, 2010, 64). In Brazil less than half of the population from 25 to 64 years have completed upper secondary education (OECD, 2015 <http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/countries/brazil>). These facts obviously have an effect on all the aspects that define media use. In Brazil there are more challenges with the conditions that can define media use compared to Finland. This also affects the practices and meanings of media use. (see Hasebrink 2012)

In Finland 85% of the adults have completed upper secondary education and due to Finland's educational policy; basically all adolescents finish at least the basic education. It seems though, that in Finland almost 20% of the 15 to 17 –year-olds have significant learning difficulties and some of them attend school irregularly. (OECD 2015; Kuusi Heli 2011, 4). (<http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/countries/finland>). In Brazil there are a lot of children and young people living in the streets, while in Finland you could say that most of them have their own mobile phones, so it seems that the target groups for social circus can vary a lot in these two countries. Also

the conditions for media use are different (see Hasebrink 2012; Ray 2010) which affects the practices and therefore also meanings of media use (Hasebrink 2012).

In Finland, social circus is used (f. ex. Hyttinen, et. al 2011b) among people with various problems (social, mental, et cetera) in various ages and, at the same time in Brazil the focus is mainly on children and young people from poor circumstances/neighbourhoods (f. e Portrait of Social Circus Survey, Cirque du Soleil, 2016). Even the target groups of social circus vary, it can be said that all the participants are somehow exposed to media (f. ex. Scolari 2016), so there exists a link between them despite of their locations or other circumstances. The reality of media use revealed to be very different in these two cases studied; in the case of Sorin Sirkus where basically all the equipment is available, the trainers were not using media equipment at all during the lessons. In case Casa de Cultura e Cidadania, on the other hand, where the trainers were instructed to use only radio in their work, they were using a laptop connected to Internet, they used music during the lessons and filmed with a video camera. There were also media pedagogical aspects included in the media use in the activities of social circus in these both countries (see chpt 4; Qvortrup 2007).

6.2 Pedagogical use of media in the activities of social circus

Following Buckingham media education "should not be exclusively confined to schools". (Buckingham 2003, 191). The objectives of media education actually differ from other school subjects (f. ex. Qvortrup 2007, 2; see also Erstad 2010, 15) but the activities of social circus on the other hand share the same objectives with media education (see p. 30). Therefore it might be fruitful to combine these two fields.

Following the findings of this study, there are already media pedagogical aspects in media use in the activities of social circus (chpt 4.3.1). In the future, combinations like social circus and media education, or other art-based pedagogies combined with different theories, might be able to produce meaningful learning experiences (see Siivonen et. al. 2011). In the activities of social circus, circus skills are used in order to stimulate the participants' body-awareness, to increase their self-esteem (see Cutcheon 2003) and social skills (see Lafortune & Bouchard 2011; Bolton 2004). These activities together with media educational elements (see f. ex. Potter, 2014; Buckingham 2003, Qvortrup 2007) that can give tools for critical thinking (f. ex. Potter, 2014) might be used as a new method that could lead to profound empowerment (see Bergsma, 2004).

Like Potter reminds, people who search for a wide range of experiences in both, real life *and* media, will eventually have better possibilities for developing media literacy because they are “applying their skills actively to build more elaborate and useful knowledge structures” (Potter, 2014, 91). Building media literacy is also an important part of the process of lifelong learning (f. ex. Mihailidis 2011).

Mobile phones are the most visible medium when talking about media use in the social circus activities in Finland and Brazil. Today mobile phones are considered to be a low cost alternative for a computer (f. ex. Scolari 2016) it is possible to use a mobile phone as an educational tool just by itself, or together with other technical equipment like TV, projectors, computers and loudspeakers. All the possibilities already exist, so now the things we need are practises of media use, for example in terms of the skills to use these mediums or contents, together with the meanings of media use (see Hasebrink 2012).

We need an open mind, especially when talking about learning environments like activities of social circus, where the main idea is to do something else than for example a media production (see f. ex. Buckingham 2003). It might be good to consider that if the children and young people use, and are already affected by the media daily (f. ex. Bolton 2004; Luke 1998), maybe it would be about time to start discussing how media pedagogy could be used in activities that include learning and participation, like social circus, without disrupting the objectives of the activities, nor the activities itself. In social circus, where the objectives are set around different circus disciplines that require the participants’ attention too, it can be challenging to include media in to the activities in a productional sense, but there are also other possibilities (see chpt. 4). Following this study there might exist a need to develop a pattern, or even a guide concerning the media use in social circus activities.

6.3 Educational aspects concerning the future

Media education has been academically recognized for years. Recently, the scholarly interest has started to turn more and more towards the international phenomenon of social circus also (Arrighi 2015, 65; Beathier, Dubois & Lemenu, 2016). Media use currently has multiple meanings, it has become mobile and found its way into the field of social circus. Therefore it is necessary to study media use in the activities of social circus.

Due to the ever-changing nature of the media environment, it is difficult for the research to stay current and take into account all the factors that explain media use in social circus activities (see f. ex. Hasebrink 2012). I hope that this study managed to enlighten some perspectives on the media use in social circus activities by explaining some reasons, restrictions and possibilities concerning the media use in this context in Finland and in Brazil. For the future research it would be interesting to investigate this topic more, for example by focusing on different themes (see chpt. 4.2) of media use in the context of social circus, and study them in a more profound way as separate studies (f. ex. Scolari 2016). For future research we need new concepts and categories together with new methodologies, because we are dealing with a myriad of new factors (see f.e. Scolari, 2016, 179) when talking about media use in the social circus activities.

The European Youth and Social Circus Network, Caravan, has launched a project called CIRCUS + which aims to answer to the educational needs of the field of social circus. CIRCUS + recently carried out a research on youth and social circus pedagogy (Beathier, Dubois & Lemenu, 2016). It might be, that in the near future social circus will be used in various ways in the fields of education, sociology, health, and art. So it is about time to start identifying and recognizing the various other functions, that are associated with social circus, like media and media use. Especially due to the educational interest which has surfaced in relation to the profession of social circus trainer (see Beathier, Dubois & Lemenu, 2016) we should start thinking how media should be taken into account in the future curricula. To be able to promote good media literacy skills, each educator has to have an understanding what is good media literacy (Kupiainen et. al. 2007, 25).

Conducting this comparative case study was an important and fruitful learning experience. It is said that conducting a case study, and the learning process it offers, is essential for developing good research skills (Flyvbjerg, 2006). This learning process also made me more curious. I understand now that a box was opened; a box that nobody has opened before, and in this box there is a lot more to study for many people besides, and after me.

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APPENDIX 1:

List of the themes used in semi-structured inquiry for the trainers

The inquiry included semi-structured questions together with open questions. Here are, together with the forewords, the themes of the questions used. The inquiry was translated into Finnish and into Portuguese, and it had altogether seven pages.

Mapping the use of media in the activities of social circus

My name is Anna Saarelainen and I am doing a study due to my master thesis in Tampere University in Finland. At this moment I am an exchange student in Brazil, at the University of Feevale in Novo Hamburgo. My study is about mapping the use of media in the social circus activities in Brazil. All these answers will be handled only by me, and my translators in Brazil and Finland in that way that nobody will be able to recognize the people answering to this inquiry.

Semi-structured questions concerning trainer's own media use in the context of social circus

- The use of Internet in social circus activities; the purpose, pages used, online tutorials, et cetera.
- The use of mobile phones in the social circus activities; taking pictures and videos, using Internet et cetera.
- The different media use during, before and after the lessons/workshops.
- The objectives for media use in general in the context of social circus.

Semi-structured questions concerning the participants' media use in the activities of social circus

- The participants' use of media in general as part of the activities.
- The participants' use of mobile phones in social circus activities.
- Professional journalism and the effects of media exposure.
- The meanings for participants' media use in the context of social circus in general. (Miksi käyttävät)

Open questions concerning the media use in the activities in general

- The reasons for using/ not using media, the effects that different media use has on participants.
- Future aspects of the media use in social circus activities.

APPENDIX 2:

List of the themes discussed in thematic personal interviews

The personal thematic interviews were conducted in Finnish and in Portuguese. All the themes mentioned below were discussed in both languages.

The themes used in the thematic personal interviews:

- Use of media equipment; what equipment, why/why not discussed together with the pedagogical aspects concerning the use of media equipment.
- Media use before, during or after the activities/lessons (focusing on Internet use like using on line - tutorials, finding music, et cetera).
- The different use of mobile phones as part of social circus activities among trainers and participants.
- The pedagogical aspects concerning the use of music and other media in social circus activities.
- Medias presence in the social circus activities, the current situation, the challenges and positive effects.
- Future perspectives concerning the media use in social circus activities.

