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## **Methods of Film Education for Children and Teenagers – Selected Issues**

Tell me and I will forget;  
show me and I may remember;  
involve me and I will understand.  
(Chinese proverb)

### **Introduction: Film Education and Teaching Methods**

Ever since film became important component of mass culture, scholars have not focused solely on its educational and socialising potential<sup>2</sup> but also postulated the need to raise the audience's awareness and educate viewers to engage in films more deeply.<sup>3</sup> That is why film education should be addressed at all active cinema-goers: at pupils at all levels of education, university students, adults as well as senior

<sup>1</sup> The Central Cabinet for Film Education

<sup>2</sup> Ludwik Skoczylas commented on the influence of film on the younger generation as early as in 1913 in his essay *Jak kinoteatr wychowuje naszą młodzież?* [How Cinema Educates Young People] (Skoczylas, 1975).

<sup>3</sup> In 1935, Bolesław W. Lewicki postulated the need to prepare young people for film reception in his essay *Młodzież przed ekranem* [Young People in front of Screens] (Lewicki, 1995).

citizens. Expository methods in working with all these groups depend chiefly on the age group and the level of film literacy of the participants. Considering the fact that film education is provided largely by schools, with the assistance of various supporting institutions, the present article is focused on methods of film education implemented in schools as well as outside school system (both formal and informal initiatives).

Contemporary film education relies on teaching methods developed by other disciplines, often improving, modifying and enriching them according to its needs as well as current tendencies in general didactics. The very term “teaching methods” has been variously interpreted by different scholars; for the purpose of the present article I will use the most popular definition listed in *Nowy słownik pedagogiczny* [New Pedagogic Dictionary]:

**teaching method** – a consistent and systematic way of working with students with the purpose of achieving educational goals. In other words, it is a tried and tested configuration of actions performed consciously by teachers and students in order to induce changes in the students’ personalities [...]. Its value depends chiefly on whether and to what extent it catalyses the students’ activity, self-reliance and involvement” (Okoń, 2001, p. 233).

Since the concept is so complex and new techniques constantly emerge, there is no standardised taxonomy of teaching techniques. We believe, however, that it is worth commenting on the most influential attempts at general classification proposed by key Polish scholars in the field, as they have exerted considerable influence on shaping tendencies in general didactics as well as developing teaching techniques used in various disciplines – which, in turn, provide a crucial reference for film education.

One of the most interesting concepts in this respect is Wincenty Okoń’s multidimensional education theory. In his view, teaching should include three important dimensions: theoretical, practical and emotional. On the basis of his theory, Okoń distinguished 4 educational strategies:

- A (associative) strategy – learning through memorizing (the teacher delivers information and learners memorise it)
- P (problem-oriented) strategy – learning through discovery (the teacher provides the right environment in which learners make their own discoveries)
- O (operative) strategy – learning through action (the teacher provides the right environment and equipment and learners perform various tasks on their own)
- E (emotional) strategy – learning through emotional experience (the teacher needs to activate learners’ receptive emotions) (Książek-Szczepanikowa, 1996, pp. 29–30).

The abovementioned strategies provide a framework for differentiating between various teaching techniques according to the educational strategy:

- expository (learning through memorizing)
- problem-oriented (learning through discovery)
- value-oriented (learning through emotional experience)
- practice-oriented (learning through action) (Okoń, 2001, p. 233).

In contrast, Maria Nagajowa, a specialist in Polish language teaching techniques, proposed a different taxonomy, dividing teaching methods into:

- verbal methods – expository and search-oriented (including heuristic method and problem-oriented teaching)
- practice-oriented methods
- observation-based methods (Nagajowa, 1990, p. 65).

Modern didactics, profiting from theories developed by the previous generations of researchers and taking into consideration current educational tendencies which encourage teachers to transform their role from that of a lecturer to a learning facilitator or tutor, proposes the following taxonomy of teaching methods:

#### EXPOSITORY

lecture  
educational talk  
story  
description  
introductory talk  
anecdote  
presentation  
explanation

#### PROBLEM-ORIENTED

problem-oriented lecture  
dialogue  
problem-oriented method  
active participation stimulation

case study	
situational method	
dramatisation	
didactic games	simulation-based
	decision-oriented
	psychological
	seminar
didactic discussion	round table
	multiple
	brainstorming
	panel
	meta-planning

DISPLAY	film theatrical performance exhibition visual presentation paired with emotional experience
PROGRAMMING	using computer using a didactic machine using a programmed manual
PRACTICAL	exposition practical exercises laboratory tests production tasks project method instruction method (Goźlińska, 1997, p. 65)

As the above chart clearly demonstrates, contemporary didactics gives primacy to teaching techniques based on stimulating learners' active participation. Their efficiency stems from the fact that learners are engaged both intellectually and emotionally, and thus they are motivated to actively search for solutions and become involved in (creative) activities. Such teaching techniques will be further discussed later in the article.

### Film Education and Polish Language Education

The beginnings of film education in Poland are strictly linked with teaching Polish language.<sup>4</sup> As a result, as far as teaching methods are concerned, film education owes much to Polish language education. Film appeared for the first time in Polish language teaching in the 1930s. Its role was purely supportive and it was meant to make classes more varied; that is why educational films were especially appreciated. At that time, there was no question of teaching students how to analyse cinematic works and understand film language. In the 1960s and 1970s, with the tendency to make Polish language teaching more cultural studies-oriented, some scholars voiced the need to give films a more prominent position in the curriculum. Two scholars based in Lodz, Bolesław W. Lewicki and Ewelina Nurczyńska-Fidelska, proved especially influential in terms of reinforcing the role of films in school education. Under their supervision, the University of Lodz began to educate future teachers (especially Polish language teachers) in how to teach students about films. In the Department of Film Studies, Nurczyńska-Fidelska created a team of scholars who conducted experimental research on film use in

<sup>4</sup> It should be noted, however, that it was Bożena Chrzęstowska who first postulated a distinction between general didactics and Polish language teaching methods. Her suggestions were based on Wincenty Okoń's didactic strategies (Chrzęstowska, Wysłouch, 1987).

schools (1977–1979).<sup>5</sup> Their findings contributed to the formulation of general guidelines for film education as well as defining the purposes of introducing film in Polish language teaching:

- To develop film reception skills and the ability to evaluate cinematic works according to their political, ethical and aesthetic value.
- To raise consciousness of the code through which an audiovisual message is transmitted.
- To raise awareness of the role of films in contemporary culture, in the context of other art forms (especially literature) and other means of mass communication.
- To promote a general approach to culture based on selection and evaluation (Nurczyńska-Fidelska, 1993, p. 16).

It is worth mentioning that Nurczyńska-Fidelska took active part in the proceedings of the Polish Language Curriculum Committee, contributing to the introduction of a new curriculum, which incorporated elements of film education into Polish language teaching (1984). Unfortunately, the new curriculum was never fully implemented due to equipment shortage in schools as well as a lack of adequate qualifications among teachers. In order to improve the situation, Nurczyńska-Fidelska launched a yearly National Film Conference (out of its 25 editions, 20 were organised in Borki near Tomaszów Mazowiecki and 5 in Radziejowice). The conference brings together people from various disciplines involved in film education: teachers, educators, cinema owners, film scholars and filmmakers. Lectures, workshops, discussions and meetings not only allow teachers to broaden their knowledge of films and film theory, but also provide them with a space in which they can share ideas regarding the didactic use of films and learn about new teaching techniques tailored to the needs of a contemporary audience. These innovative concepts are presented by experienced educators and teaching advisors. In this way, didactic methods can be shared and improved, drawing on practical experience and specialist knowledge.

At present, film is treated as a legitimate component of Polish language education (even though it is still mostly literature-oriented). In schools, films are watched as:

- autonomous texts of culture (a legitimate subject of analysis and interpretation)
- a cultural context for literary texts discussed in class
- cinematic adaptations of literary works (for contrastive analysis as well as theoretical discussion on adaptation)

<sup>5</sup> The research was conducted as part of broader research commissioned by the Minister of National Education, focused on film-based teaching techniques in schools. Their findings were published in the volume *Edukacja filmowa w szkole podstawowej i średniej* [Film Education in Primary and Secondary Schools] (Kobłewska, Butkiewicz, 1985).

- a starting point for discussion on various cultural themes (not necessarily film-related)
- inspiration for learners' own artistic activities.

The role of film education at every educational level is determined by ministerial regulations such as the **Core Curriculum**. Film education is incorporated chiefly in the syllabuses of Polish language and cultural studies. According to the guidelines outlined in the Core Curriculum, the learners should:

- “identify individual elements of a cinematic or television work (script, directing, acting) and point to features characteristic of audiovisual communication”; “understand the direct message encoded in a text of culture as well as interpret its symbolic meaning” – Polish language, stage II of education
- “receive written and spoken messages, including the audiovisual ones; distinguish between information transmitted verbally and that encoded in image and sound”; “improve their ability to analyse and interpret texts” – Polish language, stage III of education
- recognise “selected films by leading Polish directors (e.g. Krzysztof Kieślowski, Andrzej Munk, Andrzej Wajda, Krzysztof Zanussi) – Polish language, stage IV of education (basic level)
- recognise “selected films belonging to the world canon (e.g. by Ingmar Bergman, Charles Chaplin, Federico Fellini, Akira Kurosawa, Andriej Tarkowski, Orson Welles)” – Polish language, stage IV of education (extended level)
- “analyse films [...] using a set of basic theoretical terms from the appropriate field” – cultural studies, stage IV of education (Journal of Laws of 2009, no. 4, item 17).

It should be noted, however, that the extent to which film education is actually executed depends largely on the teacher, their individual film interests and competence; there are also other factors, such as educational plans and social prevention programmes of each school. It also depends on the teacher whether elements of film education will actually be attractive for students and arouse their interest in films. The key factors remain the teacher's didactic skills, their inventiveness and ability to adjust their teaching techniques to a given purpose but also to the needs of a specific group of students.

### **Film Education and Other School Subjects**

Despite the absence of official regulations regarding incorporating elements of film education into the syllabuses of subjects other than Polish language and cultural studies, teachers of subjects such as history, ethics, religion and foreign lan-

guages (stage II, III and IV of education), knowledge about society (stage III and IV of education) and philosophy (stage IV of education) often use films in class. Films are used as additional sources of knowledge, cultural and social context, a starting point or argument in a discussion on subjects specified by the Core Curriculum. Films are also adopted in information technology classes, in which they are used as an element of workshops or reference materials in preparing learners to explore safely and consciously the opportunities offered by the Internet (using information technology and its methods in film education). In addition to this, films are often employed by librarians who include film education in media education.

In all the abovementioned subjects, film is usually treated as a diversifying element that enriches the scope of material and to which students easily relate. It helps to involve learners more deeply in educational activities and allows for the traditional use of participation stimulating teaching methods. Importantly, teachers are encouraged to rely on films, since they help achieve educational objectives and assist in perfecting students' general abilities listed in the Core Curriculum, e.g.:

- ability to read, understand, utilise and process texts, including texts about culture, so as to achieve individual goals, develop one's personality and actively participate in the life of society [...]
- capacity to communicate in the native language and foreign languages, both orally and in writing
- ability to expertly utilise new information and communication technologies
- ability to seek, filter and process information
- ability to learn and recognise one's educational needs
- team working skills (Journal of Laws of 2009, no. 4, item 17).

### **Teaching Techniques in Film Education for Different Age Groups**

As it has been already mentioned, the choice of teaching techniques is usually determined by the learning objectives outlined by the curriculum. Nevertheless, students' age and individual needs at a given stage of physical and mental development are equally important. The Core Curriculum demands that "[...] when making decisions regarding teaching techniques, didactic tools, progress rates and duration of particular tasks, teachers in grades 1–3 should take different capacities of their students into careful consideration. This is especially important with respect to individual work with learners, whose intellectual, emotional, social and psychophysical development may occur at different rates" (Journal of Laws of 2014, item 803).

At stage I and stage II of education it is important to employ multidimensional teaching techniques that enable students to experience different types of learning,

e.g.: to memorise new information, solve theoretical and practical problems, develop emotional attitudes towards factual, social, moral and aesthetic content and finally, to actively transform the environment. In this approach, there are three integrated dimensions of learners' activity: intellectual, emotional and practical. The same principle is used in film education for the youngest learners, in which films are usually utilised as a pretext to introduce new topics or extend children's knowledge of the world. The learning process is facilitated by the young viewer's emotional involvement in a character's story, which allows teachers to plan interesting activities linked to the topic of the film.

Stage III (lower-secondary education) is the period when learners develop their individual personalities, abstract thinking skills, creativity, orientation and awareness of the outside world as well as advance their social skills. Nonetheless, it is also a time of emotional instability, social insecurities, testing oneself and others. For this reason, the best films for this age group are those that deal with similar themes, as they may serve as a starting point for discussion and teach learners how to cope with their own issues. Working with lower-secondary students, teachers often combine methods stimulating active participation (e.g. various discussion types, drama, project development, multiple viewpoints method, meta-planning, decision tree, mental map, practical artistic activities, etc.) and expository methods (presentation, educational talk, introductory talk, mini-lecture, etc.).

In upper-secondary schools (stage IV of education), students usually have extensive knowledge about the world, some of which they have gained through their own observations. At this stage, thinking processes are crucial. Learners develop better synthetic and analytical skills and expand their abstract thinking. That is why in working with learners belonging to this age group not only participation stimulating methods are used (focused on searching for possible solutions, case analysis, various discussion types, etc.) but also other problem-oriented and expository methods. Film education at this stage is focused mainly on discovering multiple layers of meaning linked to cultural, social, historical and philosophical contexts. Learners who are specifically interested in film are usually keen to make their own attempts at artistic creativity using film material.

### **The Most Frequently Applied Model in Film Education**

Introducing films in class remains a great conceptual, methodological and logistic challenge for teachers who hope to conduct effective film education in the school context. As educators' experience suggests, the most efficient among the tested models is the one based on the following four stages:

- introduction – preparing learners' for the screening, discussing various contexts, explaining historical, social, psychological background, etc.
- film screening (preferably in a cinema)

- collecting first impressions – free commentaries from young viewers, indicating the ways in which the film might have affected them, what caught their attention, etc.
- supplying interpretative suggestions – the main part of film education based on using appropriate teaching techniques with the purpose of enhancing the learners' understanding of cinematic works on all levels accessible for them (Mirska-Czerwińska, 2010, p. 14).

The abovementioned model is just a suggestion, a potential framework on which teachers can rely when planning their classes, all the while taking into account a large number of variables: educational purpose of a given class, selected film material, age, experience and interpretive skills of all participants, etc.

### **Teaching Techniques most Frequently Applied in Film Education**

As it has been explained, there is no unified methodology of film teaching in schools (at any level of education). This is mainly due to the fact that film is usually treated merely as a teaching aid, even though it is utilised in the teaching of almost every school subject. The decision as to whether and how to use it is left to the teacher, and therefore regulated by the teacher's personal preferences, competence, interests and sometimes, unfortunately, also their convenience. The context (i.e. the school subject in which a particular film is presented) also determines which aspects of the cinematic work are discussed.

In film education, the most popular teaching methods are those based on learners' creative involvement (based on practical exercises). Activities focused on promoting and enhancing participants' creativity may take the form of filmmaking workshops in which young people can learn how to use a film camera in order to achieve various effects on screen, how to edit films, how to use lighting, etc. Such practical activities to a certain degree reflect the content of basic courses taught on an academic level at film schools. Students participating in such workshops – if their teacher is willing to organise them – usually profit from a few or perhaps a dozen days of practical activities supervised by professional filmmakers.

Even this simple classification of various types of film education in schools proves how multi-faceted this issue is. Additionally, other aspects, often singular, impossible to measure and dependent on teachers' and learners' preferences, come into the picture. Still, all the aspects listed above provide an outline for a potential taxonomy of film use in education, which, in turn, may prove helpful in analysing teaching techniques applied in individual cases.

The main distinction in film education is the one between “education on film” and “education through film”. In the former, the focus is on developing learners' competences that allow them to watch, analyse and interpret films as well as transmitting basic theoretical knowledge needed to engage in practical activities connected with films. The main goal of education on film is to foster learners'

receptiveness and awaken their interest in films, to shape their awareness and teach them to approach films (but also other texts of culture) in a critical, analytical way.

Education through film, on the other hand, treats films as a means to achieving various educational goals, not necessarily linked to cinema. It is a didactic situation in which films are used as additional contexts or illustrations for a problem or phenomenon discussed in class. The main objective of education through film is to foster learners' interest in the surrounding reality, to shape their moral values and support them in understanding the world and its inhabitants.

### **Education on Film (Reception, Analysis and Interpretation)**

Film education is founded on a paradox. On the one hand, it is facilitated by the attractiveness and popularity of films. On the other hand, it is made difficult by the very same qualities. Young people in their everyday lives process enormous amounts of audiovisual content and this makes them confident that they already possess the competence needed to decode all messages conveyed through this medium. Teachers, therefore, have a difficult task ahead of them: they need to organise the learning process in a manner that encourages the students to look for embedded meanings rather than be content with superficial reception characteristic of their leisure and entertainment practices.

In education on film it is often worth applying methods used in film studies, adjusting them to learners' capabilities (and level of competence). For instance, **psychoanalytic theories** are often used in upper-secondary education and later stages of lower-secondary education, while some elements of **structural analysis** can be introduced as early as in primary education. Among the most popular theories are those that lend themselves to use in larger groups of students, i.e. the most universal ones (usually adapted from an **anthropological** framework), e.g. Joseph Campbell's monomyth or René Girard's scapegoating. Last but not least, given the specifics of complex school education, many teachers turn to comparative methods and draw on other art disciplines such as literature, theatre, painting, music, comics, etc.

Thanks to the long tradition of academic film (and literary) studies, enumerating various methods applicable in working with films does not pose any great difficulty. What remains problematic, however, is the formulation of a unified system of film teaching in schools, focused on analysis and interpretation. As it has been mentioned, in the spirit of modern pedagogy, the stress in film education is usually placed on **techniques stimulating learners' active participation**. Nowadays lecturing is deemed less effective, although this form does have certain advantages – it allows students to take notes that can be used later on when doing tasks on their own, but also, most importantly, it organises and compartmentalises the material (according to the frame used in the lecture, e.g.: problem by problem or chronologically).

Teaching techniques stimulating active participation are used not only in education on film reception, analysis and interpretation, but also in education through film (i.e. when films are only used as a context for or illustration of the specific phenomenon discussed in class). All methods belonging to this group are based on the Socratic concept of **heuresis** and simplified **maieutics** – only two aspects are changed, namely: the way of posing questions and the people asking them. Nowadays, it is believed that it is the learner who should be their own source of knowledge, with the teacher serving only as a key to opening their individual knowledge repositories. In some cases, the learners can perform this stimulating function for one another. In this approach, the teacher becomes one of the parties involved in a discussion and can learn from the students as well. This “democratic” view of education has developed in the aftermath of cultural changes brought by the 1960s and 1970s, e.g. Roland Barthes’s theory of interpretation outlined in his essay *The Death of the Author* (1977).<sup>6</sup>

It would be virtually impossible to enumerate all teaching techniques used in schools with reference to films. Among the most popular are: **brainstorming** (elements of the intellectual puzzle are compiled by students themselves; the teacher only provides inspiration that enables them to embark on a detailed analysis of a given issue), the **snowball technique** (helping to develop a shared interpretation on the basis of participants’ individual ideas), the **multiple viewpoints technique** (based on expanding the context), the **six thinking hats technique** (based on typical mental approaches and focusing analysis on one specific issue), the **mental map** (interpretation developed by following loose associations). All methods listed above prioritise team work and teach learners how to engage in fruitful discussion. Increasingly often, especially if there is a controversial issue at hand, teachers also employ **debate** (following the rules of eristic).

With the development of new technologies, teachers are more and more willing to employ **Internet project-based learning**. Students use **webquests** and **photocasts**, working in teams and utilising the pictures they take, various Internet sources, amateur films and recordings. This approach enables participants to improve their storytelling and team working skills as well as to practise working with multimedia material. Additionally, internet project-based learning allows teachers to coordinate work continually, including afterschool hours.

### Education on Film (Practical Filmmaking Exercises)

It is impossible to teach students elements of filmmaking without providing them with an opportunity for active and practical contact with filmmaking tools. This is possible only in the form of a **workshop** in which students are grouped in filmmaking teams whose members are given roles corresponding to those in pro-

<sup>6</sup> In his essay manifesto Roland Barthes postulated the rejection of the author as the dominant creator of meanings in any text. Instead, he empowered the reader as the chief author of meanings. Barthes’s theory legitimised the equality of status between all individual interpretations of a given text.

professional film crews. Even though nowadays almost every student owns equipment capable of recording sound and image (even older models of mobile phones have this function) and can have access to simple editing software (often distributed as freeware or included in the starter kit upon the purchase of a new PC), this method is still seldom applied at school due to the lack of professional educators equipped with the knowledge needed to become guides in the world of filmmaking.

Filmmaking workshops should thus be organised with the help of films experts (academics from artistic schools or graduates of film studies). This, however, usually involves the necessity either to organise trips for students or to invite the experts to the school – and both instances involve costs which sometimes exceed the school's (or students') means. In order to make sure that a greater number of students (especially primary school students) have the opportunity to acquire practical filmmaking skills, many institutions and NGOs include film workshops in their cultural and educational projects. The Internet portal [EdukacjaFilmowa.pl](http://EdukacjaFilmowa.pl) posted (for free access) an educational computer game *Mój pierwszy film* [My first film]. Some elements of the game closely resemble professional filmmaking tools. For instance, there is a film camera simulator which allows players to practise framing and an editing room simulator that shows how important editing is in terms of creating meanings in cinematic works.

Another teaching technique that answers learners' needs for creative expression is **educational project** (obligatory for lower-secondary students but in fact used at all stages of education). This approach allows students to prepare amateur films on their own and in this way, with only little help from the teacher, through **trial and error**, they create their first film etudes and films.

### Education Through Film

The techniques used in film education in schools, discussed earlier in this article, are also employed in education through film, only here the impact is placed on the scope of a particular school subject (which means that interpretations may vary even in the case of the same film discussed in history classes, Polish language classes, ethics, etc.).

Conversely, didactic work is different, as it requires learners' emotional involvement. This is especially true whenever the teacher's goals are not only didactic but also educational. In such cases **drama-based techniques** may prove effective, as they facilitate learners' identification with film characters. These techniques include: **tableau vivant** (students impersonate film characters and form a film frame), **improvisation** (e.g. reporting on an event presented in a film), **sculpture** (pair task in which one student performs the role of a sculptor and another becomes a sculpture representing a film character), **performance** (inspired by a film frame or scene) and **inventing a new ending** (either supplying it if a film has an open ending, or proposing an alternative ending triggered

by potential choices made by characters). Selecting the right techniques requires much involvement on the part of the teacher. Firstly, the teacher needs to make sure that when the activity is finished, learners abandon their roles and characters, so that emotions and situations which occurred while performing the task are left behind and do not seep into their real lives, disturbing the ordinary functioning of the school community. Secondly, drama-based techniques require absolute trust between teachers and students as well as among students themselves – which may be difficult to achieve in the classroom context. Nevertheless, these techniques prove especially effective in terms of inducing learners' active participation and stimulating their creativity.

Regardless of the method, it is essential that the teacher possesses the right didactic and theoretic background. They should always watch films first before showing them to students, set specific educational goals for each class and prepare detailed class outlines in order to predict various possible scenarios. It is beyond doubt that teachers' methodological level and ability to select the best and complementary teaching techniques correspond to their experience, competence and readiness for continuous professional development.

### **Film in Extracurricular Activities**

In the present article, we are using the term "extracurricular activities" to indicate various additional activities, organised at school or outside school, whose aim is to educate, integrate and provide entertainment/leisure (Gałązka, 2007). As far as film education is concerned, extracurricular activities combine the following aspects: educational, cultural, cognitive and entertaining. The main objective of extracurricular activities is to enrich and complement a school's educational offer. Considering the fact that film education in schools has been sanctioned by the Core Curriculum for early childhood and general education, **providing an offer of film-oriented extracurricular activities is not only a necessity but also an obligation** for Polish schools. Organising extracurricular activities in schools is the responsibility of the headteacher who makes plans together with teachers.

Every school is responsible for preparing an offer of extracurricular activities. Such an offer should make it possible to achieve multiple educational goals and include all activities organised at school, regardless of funding. It should be positively evaluated by the teaching staff and consulted on with the parents' board (Walczak, 2014, p. 10).

All extracurricular activities must be in accordance with the school's teaching objectives, outlined in its statute, prevention programme and educational programme. They should also be linked to the curriculum, facilitating the integration of information supplied by various school subjects. Extracurricular activities should be educationally profitable and meet the highest educational standards.

Extracurricular activities are attended by children and teenagers at all educational levels – from early childhood care to upper-secondary education. Participation in these activities facilitates comprehensive development of various skills and adds some variety to the curriculum. Often schools' promotional materials addressed at potential students include information about full-year film education programmes conducted in cooperation with cinemas or other activities connected with films (film marathons, film clubs, discussion clubs, filmmaking workshops, etc.). A battery of extracurricular film activities organised at school or with its participation significantly contributes to the school's popularity and raises the number of applications. It also provides proof of the school administration's strategic planning. Observations and surveys conducted by The Central Cabinet for Film Education (Centralny Gabinet Edukacji Filmowej) in the last 30 years on a national scale suggest that films are more and more popular, better understood and increasingly skilfully utilised educational tools. They also remain young people's favourite form of art and entertainment. It comes as no surprise then that film-based extracurricular activities are universally recommended by teaching methodologists.

Another important aim of extracurricular activities is to practise proper behaviour in new situations outside the school context (vide teachers' Quixotic battles against heaps of popcorn eaten in the cinema or answering phone calls during film screenings). It is crucial that young people get acquainted with the cultural and educational potential of their community, so that they may benefit from it in the future. Such knowledge may substantially boost their personal growth and help students pursue their cultural interests, especially in relation to films.

Group outings and events taking place at school but at the same time free from the necessity to follow patterns imposed by the curriculum or the marking system create a positive environment, conducive to forming friendships, establishing new relationships, working together as a group towards completing shared tasks and positive peer rivalry.

In Poland, within the educational sector, extracurricular activities are organised by schools and specialised institutions (extracurricular activity centres, youth centres). Other entities involved are associated with the cultural sectors, e.g. cultural community centres, libraries, museums and cinemas. Some activities for school students are organised or co-organised by universities. There are also initiatives conducted by the police, linking cinema and social prevention programmes. Churches and religious institutions offer film activities for young people. Extracurricular activities with the focus on film education are organised by leading cultural institutions such as the Polish Film Institute or Filmoteka Narodowa [Polish Film Repository]. Such institutions often launch national programmes inviting the participation of students and teachers alike; The Polish Film Institute's Filmoteka Szkolna [Film Library] is a case in point. For the most part, the abovementioned initiatives are located outside formal education but they are strictly coordinated with it. They are intentional and institutional in character.

It is impossible not to mention the growing number of extracurricular activities offered by privately owned companies (including cinemas) and NGOs. The former often team up with specialised entities operating within the educational sector; the latter answer local and national demand by organising picnics, festivals and projects that mostly fall within the category of informal education.

Film education specialists in all these institutions, companies, etc. are mostly teachers, academics, organisers of cultural activities, educators, teaching methodologists, journalists or cinema aficionados. In Poland, formal training is not required in order to teach film education classes. A university diploma in film or cultural studies is always appreciated, especially if it is combined with teaching training (which is increasingly difficult to complete for people who are not professionally active teachers) but the crucial factors are usually the educator's interpersonal skills and their individual capacity for making activities interesting for participants.

Among the most widespread forms of extracurricular school education conducted at schools are the following:

- film clubs (film screenings accompanied by introductory talks and discussions)
- film meetings (activities based on film fragments, arranged by theme, correlated with school classes or expanding on school material)
- film contests (theoretical – focused on a selected filmmaker or a group of works; practical – students are asked to prepare their own short films)
- meetings with filmmakers (also video conferences)
- film marathons (horror nights or comedy marathons)
- filmmaking workshops
- educational projects
- exhibitions or presentations
- debates on controversial subjects connected with films.

In contrast, the most popular forms of film education conducted outside school are:

- activities organised by cinemas (preferably as part of a well-prepared, interesting programme such as programmes offered by the Network of Studio and Local Cinemas, KinoSzkoła [CinemaSchool], New Horizons of Film Education and professional programmes offered by film distributors, e.g. Kino na Temat [Cinema to the Point])
- film or art festivals with modules addressed at teenagers, young critics and filmmakers (e.g. Festiwal Filmoteki Szkolnej [Film Library Festival], Festiwal Filmów NieZwykłych [Exceptional Film Festival] in Sandomierz, Ale Kino! International Young Audience Film Festival, Cinema in Sneakers)

- overnight school trips (outside the city of residence, preferably to Lodz – Polish film city, for 3–4 days full of film-focused activities, meetings, workshops and games)
- city games (focused on discovering film spots and local history)
- outdoor cinemas
- lectures, talks, meetings
- discussion clubs
- workshops organised in museums e.g. the Museum of Cinematography in Lodz or Se-Ma-For Museum of Animation in Lodz (visiting exhibitions, museum lessons, stop-motion animation workshops)
- regional and national contests.

Many of the above can be organised at school as well as outside it.

Extracurricular film education in Poland is conducted chiefly outside formal education and its scope is outlined by both guidelines and gaps left by formal education. A large number of film activities conducted outside school can be incorporated in formal education. A good example is the National Film Knowledge Contest in Gdańsk. The contest is organised by schools and educational institutions together with universities; so far, it has had 25 editions and some of the winners were offered admission to university film departments. Future years will see at least two similar initiatives with formal backing. These are: Film Knowledge and Media Communication Contest (the winners will receive admission to film schools and universities) and Lodz voivodeship film contest for lower-secondary students (the winners will score additional points on their school certificates, which they can then use when applying to upper-secondary schools).

There remains a vast and largely unexplored potential linked to internet education. Among the most popular forms of film education within this field are the following:

- Internet portals on film (EdukacjaFilmowa.pl, Filmotekaszkolna.pl, Skrytykuj.pl, Nina.gov.pl, Filmpolski.pl, Nnhef.pl, Polskaszkolafilmowa.pl, www.kinastudyjne.pl, etc.) that include encyclopaedias, filmmaking manuals, crossword puzzles, quizzes, film descriptions and opportunities to publish film reviews)
- contests (e.g. Two Silver Screens contest organised by the Network of Studio and Local Cinemas and the Central Cabinet for Film Education, blog contests for film reviews, quizzes)
- short film contests
- Internet contests for teenagers (e.g. in the programme Filmoteka Szkolna. Akcja! [Film Library. Action!])

- film festivals including internet voting
- educational computer games (e.g. *My First Film* [mentioned earlier in this article], available on EdukacjaFilmowa.pl).

Teaching methods used in extracurricular activities (just as in the case of school activities) are largely influenced by those used in school education, especially Polish language classes, however, the choice depends on the particular activity. At present, these are almost exclusively participation stimulating techniques. Whenever new activities are invented, there are also new teaching techniques correlated with their form. These teaching techniques often mirror those used in professional filmmaking.

All the film education practices discussed above are addressed at students at all educational levels, including university. There is a preference for inclusion of all ages (participation other age groups in the process of young people's education, especially senior citizens), facilitating the building of generational bridges. Working in mixed-age groups, connected with cross-generational exchange of experience and founded on mutual acceptance, proves to be a very successful approach in activities such as discussion clubs or film-focused educational projects.

### **Conclusion: an Example of a Film Education Project Uniting Various Teaching Methods**

In terms of film education, the most successful projects usually combine various teaching techniques and approaches that activate different cognition spheres. **Filmowe Pojedynki** [Film Duels] is a yearly film event organised in Lodz; in 2016, it is being organised for the 9<sup>th</sup> time. The organisers are "Venae Artis" Educational and Cultural Association, The Central Cabinet for Film Education in Lodz and Filmoteka Narodowa [National Film Repository] in Warsaw, with the financial aid of the Polish Film Institute. Filmowe Pojedynki is a popularising project addressed at lower- and upper-secondary education students (the 2016 edition has two separate programmes, one for each age group). Every edition of Filmowe Pojedynki is organised around a different theme. The themes are selected so as to resonate with young people. The current edition, titled *We Like What We Know...* is devoted to cinematic series; the former (2015) presented films telling young people's stories (*Lost in Cinema, Lost in Life*) and the 2014 edition was titled *Action Heroes*. The formula of the event has evolved over the years with observations, experience and feedback. At present, Filmowe Pojedynki consists of **film lectures** on selected issues linked to film theory and adjusted to the particular age group; **film analysis workshops** in which young participants discover different layers of meaning of selected works under the supervision of film specialists; **filmmaking workshops** preceded by **scriptwriting workshops** in which young people prepare their own film etudes under the guidance of professional filmmakers; **debates** on controversial film issues, in which young people present their views, often with a great deal

of enthusiasm, learning the rules of good discussion and respecting the opinions of others; **city games** in which young people from outside of Lodz can discover places linked to historical and contemporary filmmaking – this type of activity always causes a great deal of emotion due to the element of peer competition. Many young participants also appreciate **meetings with artists from various film professions**. Last year, invited guests included the actor Robert Więckiewicz, the cameraman and animation film director Zbigniew Kotecki and the experienced stunt man Ryszard Janikowski.

Filmowe Pojedynki's greatest asset is a **group of partner institutions** that provide theoretical (the University of Lodz, Łódzkie Centrum Doskonalenia Nauczycieli i Kształcenia Praktycznego [The Lodz Centre of Teacher Training and Practical Education]) and organisational (Pałac Młodzieży im. J. Tuwima [the Julian Tuwim Youth Centre]) support. Some others share their resources (the Film Museum, Se-Ma-For Museum of Animation, the Film School in Lodz, Charlie cinema).

Evaluation surveys and growing participation rates clearly show that the formula of Filmowe Pojedynki proves successful in terms of working with young people, as it **combines educational values with popularising activities and entertainment**. It also provides an opportunity for integrating young people from different cities and backgrounds.

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## Summary

The article describes teaching techniques used in film education in schools (at every level) and outside schools. All techniques described in the article are placed within the context of Polish didactics and delineate the evolution of dominant approaches to film education and regulations determining the work of teachers and film educators. The article discusses various factors that need to be taken into consideration when selecting the most appropriate teaching techniques and describes the main film didactic methods with a special focus on participation stimulating techniques. Finally, the article provides a brief overview of various teaching techniques utilised in extracurricular film education, with reference to existing procedural demands. The article is based on theoretical knowledge as well as the authors' practical experience.

**Keywords:** film literacy, film education