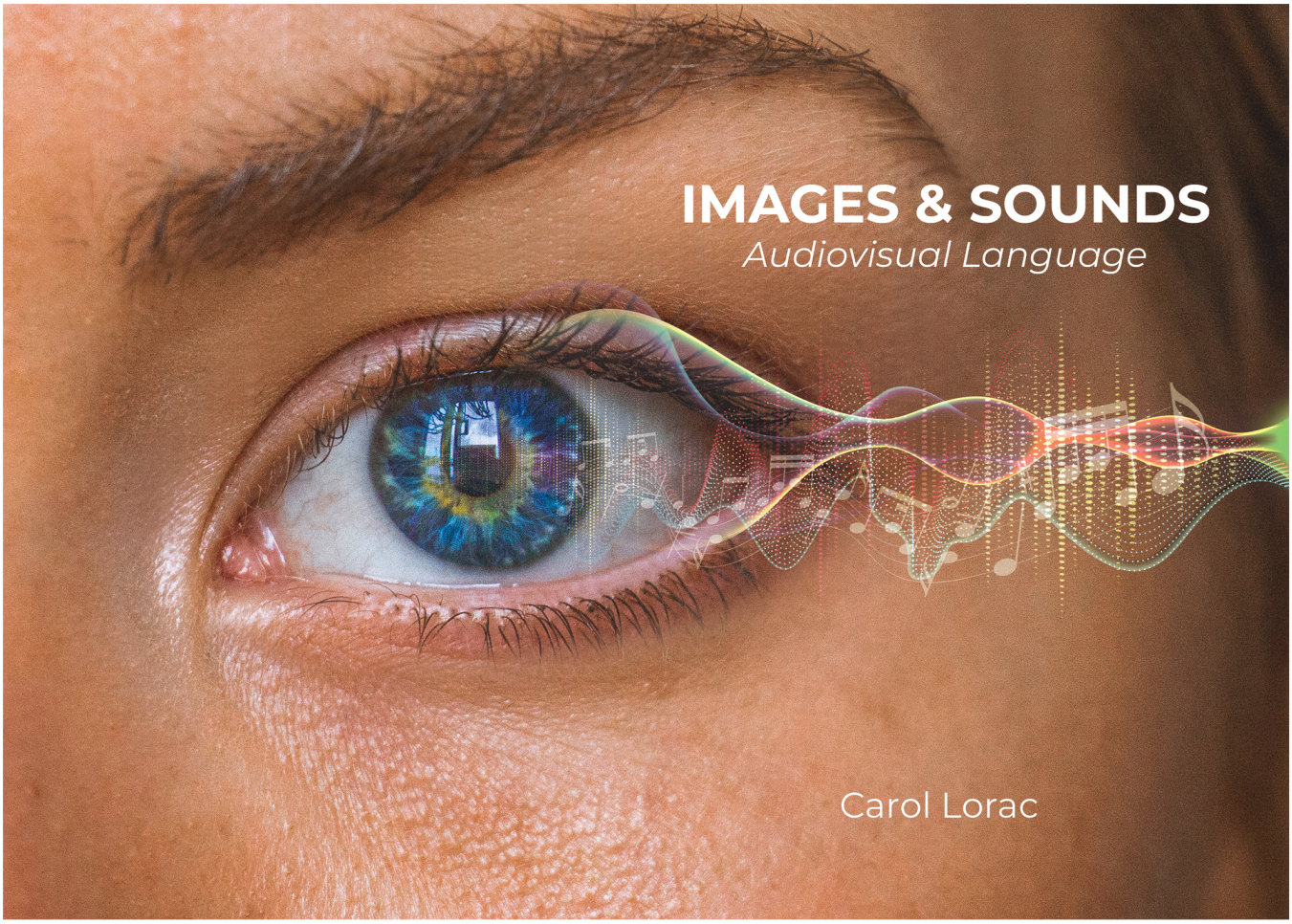

Chapter 5
Imagination and Technique: Audiovisual Composing

Introducing Audiovisual Composing across the Curriculum
Communication and Social Skills

Images and Sounds is a

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Images and Sounds Audiovisual Language
Chapter 5 Backstory 1

Introducing Audiovisual Composing across the Curriculum
Communication and Social Skills

Carol Lorac

In *Images and Sounds Audiovisual Language (*chapter 5 *Imagination and Technique: Audiovisual Composing, Video Essays, Letters, Portraits and Poems*)) the work of the Communications and Social Skills project is described and explained in terms of the significance of audiovisual composing for learning subjects across the curriculum and the innovative audiovisual compositions that were produced.

However, the emphasis on audiovisual composing left may other questions unanswered. Who funded the Communication and Social Skills Project? Why was an audiovisual composing project funded in 1976? Who participated in the Communication and Social Skills project and how was it organised? What effect did the Communication and Social Skills project have on subject learning? How was the Communications and Social Skills project evaluated?

Who funded the Communication and Social Skills Project?

The Schools Council for Curriculum and Examinations funded the Communication and Social Skills project, in 1976. It was established in 1965 by the UK Department of Education. A wide range of educational bodies, including teachers' organizations, was represented on the Council. In 1970 it became an independent body funded in equal parts by the UK Government and Local Education Authorities. When government funds were withdrawn from the Schools Council it went into voluntary liquidation in 1984.

The School Councils remit was to provide leadership in curriculum development together with improvements in examinations and assessment. Its work was carried out by committees and working parties, which were responsible for different programmes. It commissioned a vast and diverse range of research in most subject disciplines and published a large quantity of reports: providing expert curriculum advice to ministers.

The rise of the school age from fifteen to sixteen years was a significant challenge for educators: and preparations that started in 1964, become law in 1972. Reluctant learner's, who tended to be under-performers, were a particular challenge. The Schools Council's innovative curriculum projects in art and the built environment, history, geography, science, and drama were inspirational; and played a significant role in influencing the educational curriculum that followed. Another important development occurred within the teaching of craft, which transformed design and technology.

The Communication and Social Skills project had a Schools Council Curriculum Officer and a consultative committee comprising educational experts, advisors and head teachers. The list of consultative committee participants can be found in the book Communication and Social Skills published by Wheaton, a division of Pergamon Press, in 1981. The Schools Council Curriculum Officer was Maurice Plaskow. He guided the project from proposal stage right through to publication of the reports and outputs. He was an inspirational mentor. I collaborated in this endeavor with Michael Weiss.[1]

The Communication and Social Skills project was not awarded for harnessing the potential of the new electronic media: as a means for using audiovisual composing as a language, for reasoning with and expressing learning across the curriculum. The use of the electronic technologies were welcomed as a tool, which enabled alternative teaching methods that might address the educational concerns of the day – the development of communication and social skills. In particular, making videos could encourage speaking (discussing, giving and taking instructions, making decisions), listening (to each other and experts), reading (for 'real' practical activities), writing (for collaborative authoring) and organizing and managing (group activities).

Why was an audiovisual composing project funded at this time?

The government Department for Education and Science report *A Language for Life* [2] had been published and there was now a genuine concern to improve all communication skills within the school curriculum. This included talking and listening as well as writing and reading. Innovative curriculum development was required to deal with these issues, particularly for oral communication and for young people who were finding it difficult to learn to write.

Employability increasingly required greater social competences and pedagogic methods that could encourage skills needed for problem solving, managing time and resources, negotiating and independent thinking. The ability to participate in responsible actions was seen as critical.[3] There was also a growing interest in the development of electronic technologies, particularly computers, and educationalists were looking for ways of using new technologies in the classroom. [4]

The process of using audiovisual composing and carrying out video production tasks provided opportunities for the development of a wide range of communication and social skills.

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[1] Note: I collaborated on the Communication and Social Skills project with Michael Weiss. Our mentor at the Schools Council was Maurice Plaskow.

[2] The UK Department for Education and Science (DES) produced A Language for Life. This was the report of the Committee of Enquiry appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science under the Chairmanship of Sir Alan Bullock FBA. A language for life was the title of the Bullock Report.

[3] References for citations on need for Social skills education

[4] The Council for Educational Technology (CET) was responsible for new initiatives in the use of computers and audiovisual technologies in the classroom. There was a growing interest in the development of electronic technologies, particularly computers, and educationalists were looking for ways of using new technologies in the classroom. The use of audiovisual equipment was seen as complementary to that goal.

Students needed to discuss the topics for their audiovisual composition, carry out research, take notes, negotiate with each other and others outside the classroom, write scripts and create storyboards, make decisions, organize video recording activities (finding or making locations and props), manage (people, resources and time), present and perform their own material, develop technical skills and evaluate their own productions. Throughout these tasks the students would be writing, reading, talking and listening, together with planning, organizing, decision-making and developing leadership skills.

Gradually, the significance that audiovisual composing, and its associated production processes, could provide a simulation of a 'real life' situation in the classroom, was recognized as an attractive alternative to traditional classroom activities for some teenagers.

At that time, young people were fascinated by television and producing their own audiovisual compositions was seen as a motivator for subject learning and a way of developing transferable skills. The use of audiovisual equipment was seen as contributing to the process of integrating new technologies into the classroom. Using audiovisual methods seemed to satisfy many of the general educational needs at that time and it was these factors that enabled the beginning of the Schools Council's Communication and Social Skills project.

Who participated in the Communication and Social Skills project and how was it organised?

At the beginning of the Communication and Social Skills project Michael and I had wanted to work in three Local Educational Authorities, close to London and the Home Counties. They already had an investment in audiovisual technology and a commitment to practical media work in education. However, the project consultative committee, in its wisdom, suggested that if the project was to be generalized throughout Britain then it should be situated in a testing location.

Eventually, we were based at New College, Durham and worked in five Local Education Authorities in the North East of England: Durham, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Gateshead, and Sunderland. The local advisers from the authorities were very supportive enabling access to schools together with identifying potential teachers that might find participating in the project useful. One of our major concerns was the level of audiovisual facilities available for the participating schools, teachers and students; however, we discovered that these five local authorities had a remarkable amount of audiovisual hardware for the nineteen seventies. Tape-slide, 8mm film and black and white video, both portable (camera linked by cables to video recorder), and a small educational television studio were all available, as well as support from audiovisual technicians attached to local authority educational technology and audiovisual aids centres.

However, these facilities did present some problems. Synchronizing the images and sounds in tape slide required care. The images were static. Although limited movement was created by using more than one projector and creating dissolves

between the images. The students became quite inventive in how they shot their images so that when they dissolved them different types of movement occurred. Synchronized images and sounds on 8mm film were impossible, in an educational setting, at that time. So 8mm film was used predominantly for animation: playing an audio recorder with music or voice over could accompany the film. Video recording, although cumbersome and in black and white, was possible; however, analogue editing suites were not available to schools and editing is a significant process within audiovisual composing. As a way of providing more schools with access to both the recording and editing processes, one local authority loaned a small two camera studio, for half a term at a time to schools that requested it; and the project also supplied a portable three camera television studio that was taken from school to school, and set up in the school hall or in a cleared area within a large classroom. With these facilities the students could edit, as they recorded, as a way of increasing the possibility of more complex story making. Although this seems a primitive approach by technological possibilities today, it was useful at that time.

Initially, twenty teachers in ten secondary schools from the five participating local education authorities participated in the Communication and Social Skills project. Schools and teachers were selected on the basis of ensuring a wide range of subjects, pupil ages and abilities. An initial two-day workshop was organized where the project team and teachers initially explored issues surrounding the processes involved in learning, acknowledging that most activities in school were directly related to subject teaching. So it became clear that looking at the ways in which subject teaching was taught was crucial to seeing where and how it might be possible to create opportunities for developing communication and social skills.

Learning a body of knowledge is a complex area. Most of the teachers explained that they used traditional delivery methods comprising conventional teacher input, followed by the students reading and writing a response. This method was used partly because they perceived that this process was highly subject focused in a way that could be controlled and very efficient in terms of time management. However, they recognized that this way of working did not encourage speaking and listening skills, or such social skills as negotiation and decision-taking related to action or managing activities. Those teachers that used discovery methods, action research, simulations and dramatic performance for exploring and responding to subject disciplines agreed that these methods did encourage a wider range of communication and social skills. However, such methods usually took more time and required some specialist skills: for instance, managing dynamic activity within a classroom of thirty plus students; understanding how to assess the value of more discursive activity in relation to the central focus of targeted subject learning objectives; and solving issues of assessing an individual contribution to a group effort.

On the issue of time management, the teachers acknowledged that although there were time pressures within the curriculum; active, creative learning methods often developed a greater in-depth understanding of a topic: rather than merely memorizing the teacher presentation, without much interrogation of underlying meanings and repeating the content in an essay. The role of peer-to-peer communication and social skills were seen as pivotal to strengthening achievement.

The participating teachers discussed communication skills within a broad perspective that covered the various modes through which knowledge and information is shared, for instance, through facts, feelings, judgments and concepts. Verbally based skills were tackled in terms of, for instance, the needs to understand and develop different discourses for different communicative purposes or situations, together with other powerful forms of communication, for instance, visual images and patterns of sound. Social skills were thought about in terms of facilitating effective relationships in groups, for instance, the flexibility necessary to adapt to changes in role, arising from changes in group composition and activities. However, the teachers agreed that any teaching methods that encouraged the development of communication and social skills would need to take into account the ways in which subjects were taught and this included any audiovisual methods.

This discussion led directly into a description of the audiovisual methods used within the Communication and Social Skills project. Audiovisual methods combine conventional and activity-based teaching methods (learning by discovery, action research, simulations and dramatic performance). A teacher would introduce a subject topic in a conventional way followed by students undertaking reading and writing tasks. However, the reading now focuses on independent selection and research and the writing requires the students to explore and use a range of different genres and discourses: with both reading and writing aimed at creating an audiovisual composition. The work takes place in small groups and the writing may be individually composed or collaboratively authored. Michael and I explained that it was during the audiovisual composing and production processes that a vast range of communication and social skills were required.

It was explained to the teachers that as their students worked in small groups they would be responsible for the organization and execution of a number of tasks. Initially, the students would discuss the topic introduced by the teacher, taking decisions on how they might respond, together with allocating different research tasks to each member of the group. Following conventional and action-based research the students, working individually and collectively, would bring the written and visual materials back to the group and discuss how they might begin to shape them. As the students develop an overall theme the process of shaping the materials would begin by creating an initial script / storyboard. The group might discus, at this stage, the main ideas that they want to include. Following this, they might think about the ways in which they want to structure the materials to create their audiovisual story. This requires organizing the materials gleaned during research, which might include, for instance, some ideas (textual and visual) arising from an article in a journal or chapter in a book. This material written in prose (or taking the form of illustrations) would need to be transformed into other types of discourses and audiovisual representations. The students would need to summarize the text, identifying the salient points, before, for instance, creating a commentary that could be spoken by a presenter, or as a voice-over accompanying appropriate images. Or the ideas, taken from the article or chapter, could be used within an interview situation with questions that could illicit responses that covered the same information. Or the students could create dialogue for a dramatic re-construction that covers the ideas within the topic given by the teacher.

There is a wide choice of ways in which the students can deliver their response to a topic: working on the verbal and visual communication simultaneously. As they progress they would modify and redraft their emerging audiovisual composition, develop and create more materials if required, write and rehearse their script / storyboard. Finally, they would record and evaluate their end product - the audiovisual composition.

After this general description of the processes comprising audiovisual composing and production, the teachers then broke up into small groups and began the task of making their own audiovisual compositions. A topic was given, materials were available for research and they experienced an audiovisual story-building process. The early stages of the process were not new to the teachers as they focused on their topic, carried out research and shaped their results into a story. The new activity was thinking about how they were going to 'show' and 'tell' their story (audiovisual composing), and how they could record it (audiovisual production). At this stage audiovisual scripts / storyboards were formally introduced together with the audiovisual equipment and recording techniques. After various demonstrations and exercises they recorded their group audiovisual response to the topic.

There was no attempt by the project team to impose any particular order of importance as far as the aims of the participating teachers were concerned and teachers agreed to engage in the work for a variety of reasons. In some cases recorded sound and images were seen as a way by which students could bypass their difficulties in writing by producing an audiovisual composition, while, at the same time, practicing writing within a variety of practical activities, but without a written composition being the final output. In others the hope was to motivate reluctant readers and writers. One area that interested most of the teachers was the effect that this change of approach would have upon subject learning, and in particular the value of students working collaboratively and shaping their work through group discussion and the use of different discourses. The project team would provide support for the teachers when using audiovisual methods through information and advice about managing the learning process and organizing the classroom.

The twenty teachers that took part in the Communication and Social Skills project represented thirteen subject areas: including history, English, art, science, modern languages, drama and media studies, rural studies, and life studies. In one school a science teacher co-operated with an art teacher and the students made animated films about science topics.

Each teacher adapted part of his or her teaching programme to take into account the suggestions offered by the project team and made video, film, or tape-slide productions responding to the subjects under study. As teachers gained experience they began to extend their audiovisual methods to other parts of the curriculum, classes and ability levels and to meet new aims. Some built their work into examination syllabuses. Teachers modified their teaching rationale to capitalize on the new kinds of learning that was taking place.

The students came from rural and urban, large and small, state schools; and covered the whole age range from eleven to eighteen years. They came from mixed sex

classes, by and large, so it was possible to observe both boys and girls taking part and working collaboratively with each other. Every learner tried out all the roles, including the technical and performance tasks, because the positions were rotated to give every learner a chance to experience the different kinds of discourse and activity that comprise audiovisual composing.

The student groups organized, researched, wrote, directed, performed and recorded their work in each subject. Critically evaluating it at the end. [5] They used tape-slide and super 8 film facilities, single camera video, a local educational television studio run by one of the local education authorities and a portable three-camera television studio, which was taken into schools by the project team. The students produced audiovisual compositions about subjects across the curriculum. [6]

What effect did the Communication and Social Skills project have on subject learning?

The Communication and Social Skills Project began in 1976 and was introduced into the educational system as a *teaching method*, rather than a *'language'*: a method that provided opportunities for developing communication and social skills and which exploited audiovisual technologies. The audiovisual products that emerged from the production process would be called audiovisual statements, rather than audiovisual compositions because notions of audiovisual composing implied the use of a language, which at that time was not recognized by the project consultative committee.

The project team and participating teachers introduced audiovisual methods into the learning process and observed the ways in which it encouraged communication and social skills and the affects that this had on the acquisition of knowledge. However, in the process of observing students using images and sounds in audiovisual statement making, a basis for beginning to understand how audiovisual composing might work for expressing subject learning across the curriculum, also emerged.

For most of the teachers and students working in the Communication and Social skills project introducing audiovisual composing, alongside writing, for subjects across the curriculum was a new experience. In the early 1970's, in some parts of the country, it was possible to observe students producing their own video programmes. In these instances video production tended to be used for two purposes: to aid critical understanding in 'reading' media outputs and to support the development of social skills in vocational courses.

[5] Note: Detailed descriptions of the schools comprising form entry numbers, catchment area, type of buildings, situation and size of the sixth form: the classes comprising the class sizes, streaming, age of students, time per week used for the project, and examinations involved: and the teachers Their training, subjects taught, years of experience, special responsibilities, and sex, all appear in Carol Lorac and Michael Weiss, *Communication and Social Skills*. Wheaton 1981

[6] Note: The findings from this Project are published in *Communication and Social Skills,* Lorac C. & Weiss M., Wheaton 1981[Use some visual material from this book]

Media studies was beginning to be taught in schools and students were encouraged to develop a critical appreciation of media outputs by, for instance, decoding newspapers and television news. One way of teaching theories underpinning media analysis, such as stereotyping or bias, involved the students viewing an advertisement or news programme and then producing their own versions, as a way of exploring these critical concepts.

During these activities students did actively engage in discussing and expressing their views on cultural aspects of the media that surrounded them. However, the practical task that required them to imitate the professional genres of broadcast television formats was problematic. Young people needed skills in how to show and tell stories in images and sounds and, in the absence of such skills being taught, failing to articulate what they wanted to say could be de-motivating.

Curricula related to vocational courses were also using video production as a way of increasing personal confidence and fostering individual and group initiatives. However, all too often, the teachers and students lack of experience in composing in images and sounds led to low expectations by teachers regarding what the students could create and disappointment for the young participants because they evaluated their video output against professional media programmes.

If an educational curriculum had existed that taught the practice of audiovisual composing using, for instance, the generative framework for audiovisual composing developed throughout *Images and Sounds Audiovisual Lang*uage the learning experience for students would have been different. Students would have been using audiovisual composing to produce video - essays, reports and case studies for subject learning across the curriculum. Teachers would have been aware that audiovisual composing could be assessed in exactly the same way that they assess written composing by evaluating the quality of the content and then how well the form articulates that content. This would have resolved the difficulties surrounding competency in audiovisual composing. The absence of such a curriculum presented the Communication and Social Skills project team with problems and challenges, particularly when value is placed on the transferable skills made possible within the 'process' of video production, without a proper concern for what is required for quality in the 'end-product'.

For communication to be a satisfying experience it is important to be relatively articulate in creating reflective 'texts' that can provide insights and understanding. Thought and language are inter-twinned, as is content and form. If your expressive capacities cannot match the complexity of your thinking, as you are trying to express an idea, topic or concept, frustration occurs. Some young people may have felt this frustration when they were unable to master written composing. The motivational powers of working with audiovisual composing can only be sustained when it is possible to communicate effectively and say what you mean, using images and sounds.

The feasibility study, for the Communication and Social Skills project, concerned itself with four broad areas. First, the ways in which audiovisual composing contributed to communication skills, including reading, writing, speaking and listening. Secondly, the opportunities it provided for the development of social skills by using a group

process when creating audiovisual compositions. Thirdly, the impact on students' learning while they were using audiovisual composing for subjects across the curriculum. Finally, the issues surrounding whether young people could use audiovisual technologies to communicate their learning concerns and, if so, how.

The project findings revealed that using audiovisual composing enhanced the development of a wide range of communication skills and the following account is only a brief summary. More detailed descriptions and explanations can be found in the project report.[7]

Reading, as part of a process for producing audiovisual compositions, took place in a variety of situations and for a range of purposes. This included, for instance, collaborative reading to co-ordinate group activity, individual reading for research purposes and reading aloud to record the soundtrack. Young people began analyzing texts carefully as they transformed contents (from different sources) into scripts that could require commentary or dramatic dialogue. Audiovisual composing motivated many reluctant students to read because they respected the fact that they were reading for a concrete activity and outcome that they valued.

Writing, as part of audiovisual composing, also took on a new purpose. In the process of producing a script young people were eager to redraft written work because they realized that it would improve their audiovisual composition. The process of producing scripts required a range of writing tasks and skills, comprising, for instance, summarizing research material, constructing surveys, note taking, creatively writing commentary, dialogue, poetry and prose. Narrative skills were honed as the students shaped and built their stories. Through these activities motivation increased particularly with slow and reluctant students.

Different sorts of speaking and listening were needed in audiovisual composing, comprising, for instance, discussion (expanding, qualifying and exploring ideas), negotiation (talk that was usually purposeful and was often unexpectedly succinct with students using a wide range of language codes and styles), action research (asking questions and interacting with experts or members of the public), presentation skills (delivering formal commentary, conducting interviews or using dramatic dialogue), using technical language (for instance, pan left and zoom into close-up, in relation to the operation of the technologies); and developing subject specific formal language for expressing particular topics across the curriculum. Further more, the young people were frequently observed listening carefully to each other in order to effect decisions or to co-ordinate actions.

As far as the development of social interaction was concerned, the findings showed that the students enjoyed working in groups developing sensitivities to each other's needs and styles of thinking and working. They learned how to take group decisions, for instance, by voting as a group and abiding by majority decisions, or giving priority to member(s) of the group that they thought were more 'expert' or who were going to carry out the task. They began to understand and develop leadership skills often changing the leader as the activities changed to ensure the best results. They learned to support each other's efforts and achieve group cohesion.

[7] *Communication and Social Skills*, C. Lorac and M. Weiss, Wheaton Publications 1981

Grasping concepts and ideas and memorizing facts was improved by using audiovisual methods of learning. This was demonstrated by the ways in which the students expressed their understanding of the subject matter. Their audiovisual compositions comprised detailed descriptions, expositions and explanations including the capacity for the logical development of theoretical arguments.

Students used a range of discourses by participating in different roles, such as on-camera presenters, commentators, interviewers and interviewees, demonstrators and actors in dramatic reconstructions. Extending the range of ways in which their understanding of topics could be expressed enabled more comprehensive responses. The 'rich' language of audiovisual composing, combining words, images and sounds, also contributed to their success in expressing what they had come to 'know' from what they had been taught.

By carrying out individual and small group research and using learner-centered approaches within an audiovisual production process, young people explored connections between theoretical ideas and practical applications. Further more, audiovisual composing encouraged an affective, as well as cognitive, response to topics, expanding the students' understanding and knowledge of subjects under study together with increasing their ability to structure their work.

For students who had found difficulty in expressing themselves through written composing, partly because of the abstract nature of the written word, an opportunity to use audiovisual composing provided them with an alternative way of demonstrating that they had understood what they had learnt. In structuring their responses to school subjects they were able to use a more concrete composing process. They could employ many different kinds of talk, bring into play actual places and produce events and situations that could be expressed through images and sounds. This made the creation of elaborated reflective 'texts' possible. Later, when asked to write about the same topic, the students were able to use the logical structures built up in their audiovisual compositions and transfer them to create more extended written pieces.

For the very able students who were used to manipulating abstract concepts and writing about them, using audiovisual composing led them to seek for derivations and applications of abstract concepts, thus anchoring their learning.

The Communication and Social Skills Project team investigated the feasibility of introducing audiovisual methods and technology into the current organizational and management structures within schools. As part of this process we looked at the availability of technical equipment together with the skills and abilities of teachers and students in their use of audiovisual facilities.

We also had to take into account school timetables and the dual issues of the quantity of time that might be available for innovation, as part of subject learning and

the amount of time that audiovisual composing [8] might take, in comparison with written composing. There were also space issues. Could audiovisual composing take place in a normal classroom filled with thirty plus, students, tables and chairs? Most important however, underpinning all these technical, organizational and time issues, was the investigation into the effects on students of the increased opportunities for developing communication and social skills as well as the contribution that audiovisual composing might make to the learning of different subjects.

It became clear very quickly that young people were able to use the available technical recording equipment: that the activities associated with audiovisual methods could be carried out within the normal school curriculum and timetabling constraints and that it was possible to use audiovisual composing for communicating ideas and information about subjects across the curriculum. The 'how' is another story.

How was the Communications and Social Skills project evaluated?

The project team, their evaluator, the teachers and some of their advisers evaluated the Communication and Social Skills project. As the work progressed many hours of observation took place with frequent video recording of the students carrying out various tasks, together with teacher and learner interviews. These observations provided field notes and video records of the production process, which revealed the various communication and social skills used by the students, illustrating the ways in which students were using images and sounds in audiovisual composing.

The audiovisual statements created by the students also provided ways of seeing how they shaped their contents, within relevant forms. This supplied further understanding about how they were responding to their learning; and how they were using images and sounds to show and tell their story.

Two Stories emerged from the Communication and Social Skills Project

The Communications and Social Skills project created two interlinked contexts and stories: one from the point-of-view of the development of communication and social skills and the second from the perspective of the introduction of audiovisual composing into an educational curriculum. The later story forms the basis for Chapter 5 in *Images and Sounds Audiovisual Language*.

In the book *Communication and Social Skills*,[9] a report of the project, published in 1981, the introduction acknowledged that:
"The growing complexity and sophistication of the modern world made heavy demands upon the understanding and abilities of all young people, no matter what their academic potential might seem to be. Indeed, the gap between these demands

[8] Note: I will use the term audiovisual composing rather than audiovisual statement making because I am now reflecting on this work and do not want to be restricted to a more restricted concept now.
[9] Carol Lorac and Michael Weiss, Communication and Social Skills. Wheaton/Pergamon Press 1981

and the capacity of young people to respond to them confidently seemed to have widened in the post war years, partly because society required an ever wider range of personal and social skills. It was also becoming clearer that, unless these skills received sufficient and expert attention, serious stresses could develop within the individual, inside schools and in society at large. Particularly dangerous were those stresses and conflicts, which were due to, or were deepened by, the ability of individuals to communicate adequately. Inadequacy in communication and social skills was revealing itself not only in social conflicts such as discord between generations, but also in the classroom, where it greatly reduced both teaching and learning potential. Many teachers were aware of these problems and were deeply concerned about their own responsibility in preparing pupils for creative participation in society".

Significantly while realizing that communication and social skills are critical to students' development it was felt that:
"…the form and direction of almost all the work that has been done (on learning) has been shaped by a number of assumptions, which are overdue for close re-examination. One of these is the notion of the almost total supremacy in the learning process of verbal (particularly written) and numerical languages. Another is the view that learning proceeds most efficiently through overwhelming attention to logical thought, analysis, sequential reasoning and abstraction. Both notions place a premium upon the learning of a body of knowledge and related intellectual processes through *individual* activity and skills, and by implication diminish the importance of not only the social context in which learning and action take place, but also the development of the social skills necessary for the effective participation in society."

It was suggested that there was:
" …good, recent evidence[10] to support the view that there were important modes of response and learning other than the verbal, the numerical and the sequential and that to ignore these other modes at best narrows children's understanding and at worst warps it or makes it impossible. In addition there was a pressing need to facilitate some form of *achievement* for those children who can achieve little in the conventional verbal/literacy/mathematical modes. Without some form of self-recognized and externally approved achievements, the downward spiral of deteriorating self image and inability to cope with the conventional modes destroys the individual, alienates him from these conventional modes and makes almost any form of constructive learning or skill acquisition very difficult indeed. The most fundamental requirements of the learning environment is that it must establish firmly the worth of the individual, and this means recognition of the full range of abilities that pupils may possess".

This notion was expanded by the ideas that:
"Those who have worked constantly with young people over a long period know how important to them are the non-verbal modes of response, knowing and communication – particularly those of visual form, sound, gesture and movement. These are languages in constant and powerful use in the modern world yet their importance is still not generally acknowledged in education, because of the relative importance assigned to cognition and the narrow interpretation of this term. The

[10] R. Ornstern, *The Psychology of Consciousness*. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman

broader view[11] implies that it is possible and important to know the world visually, auditorily and kinesthetically. If so, then many youngsters who find it difficult to learn about the world by means of verbal and mathematical surrogates may find this much easier if they were given opportunities to explore the world visually, auditorily and kinesthetically".

With regard to the emergent use of new media it was concluded that:
"Although a lot of work has been done on harnessing technological developments to education in the shape of audio-visual aids, these aids have been used as teaching supports, to transmit information for verbal and mathematical modes of learning, and not as media through the production of which children experience creative learning directly".

It is a salutary experience to quote from this book and to realize that thirty years later these problems have still not been overcome for a vast number of the young people today.

There have been many educational initiatives and innovative curriculum developments that have taken place since 1981. Most recently, the Creative Partnerships Programme, which was the UK governments flagship creative learning programme established in 2002 to develop young peoples creativity across England: it was managed by the Arts Council and funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Children, Schools and Families. This programme brought practicing artists, dramatists and professionals from the cultural industries - independent film, video, radio and multimedia companies - into schools to work alongside teachers and students using arts-based techniques across the curriculum. In *Images and Sounds Audiovisual Language*, chapter 8, some of the activities of the Creative Partnerships programme are explored.

However, non of the initiatives, over the years, have introduced audiovisual composing into the curriculum in a systematic way, as a parallel and complimentary language for reasoning with, as well as for exploring and expressing, knowledge

[11] Elliot W. Eisner, *The Role of the Arts in the Invention of Man*. Paper delivered to the 23rd World Congress of I.N.S.E.A., August 1978.