



Media/Everyday Life 2030

Imagining Workshop

The project

The Media/Everyday Life 2030 Imagining Workshop model was developed as part of the research project *Young people imagining media(ted) futures*: Developing a methodology for change (2020-2021). The project was carried out in collaboration with the Comet Research Centre of Tampere University and the Information Networks Degree Programme at Aalto University. The project was funded by the Media Industry Research Foundation of Finland as part of its Youth and Media funding call. Media industry partners of the project were the Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE and Turun Sanomat, a Turku region newspaper. Professor Seija Ridell from the Faculty of Information Technology and Communication at Tampere University led the project. Professor of Practice Risto Sarvas supervised Aalto University's contribution. Minna Vigren (prev. Saariketo) DrSocSci, Aalto University and Auli Harju MSocSci, Tampere University conducted the research and were responsible for its practical implementation, together with research assistants Kati Hiltunen MA and Kaisa Koski, media studies master's student and community educator.

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Journalismin, viestinnän ja median tutkimuskeskus
Tampere Research Centre for Journalism, Media and Communication

MEDIA-ALAN  TUTKIMUSSÄÄTIÖ

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Why organise an imagining workshop?

How everyday life is now filled with media technology and the feelings it evokes have come to the fore in both research in various disciplines and the media. This workshop was developed so that young people can think about their mediated everyday life and related struggles in a playful manner. In addition, we wanted to create opportunities for imagining what a desirable mediated everyday life could be like. The exercises provide opportunities to choose a theme for the workshop (for example, smart devices, social media, news, or games). The workshop can be organised in other settings as well, for example, at a workplace or in an NGO. In the research project, the workshop participants were employees of our media industry partners and young people aged 14 to 18 years.

The idea behind the developing this workshop is that the future is not predetermined and that we can direct its course. We believe that it is important to offer young people space to have their thoughts and values expressed and heard and, in this way, strengthen their role as active citizens. The Media/Everyday life 2030 Imagining Workshop emphasises the importance of young people's perceptions, hopes, and fears about the future, precisely because the future concerns them in a particularly essential way.

You can find everything you need to run the workshop here. It contains the following instructions:

- **Instructions for the workshop facilitator:** how the facilitator can use the material and what is needed to run the workshop
- **Workshop:** a selection of exercises for tuning; instructions for the imagining game and the necessary materials (a sheet for developing the character and taking notes, playing cards, and game instructions to be distributed to the participants or projected onto a screen); a selection of exercises to reflect the workshop.

We hope that with these instructions, you can put together an imagining workshop that is optimal for your group.

Wishing you a productive workshop,
The Young people imagining media(ted) futures: Developing a methodology for change research group

Instructions for the facilitator

Imagining together is not easy. That's why you should start the workshop by tuning in. If the participants do not know each other, it's good practise to start with a round of introductions. We have used the idea of time travel as the main idea of the workshop, and in the presentation round, for example, you can ask each participant to say what they would take with them from the present on a time trip to the future or what they would save in a time capsule.

Images or videos that envision the media (technology) of the future can be used to tune in. The participants can watch them on their own devices, or they can be projected on a screen. The videos should be thought-provoking but not 'lock in' a particular narrative of the future. Showing very dystopian videos can give an orientation towards dark and even anxious or oppressive moods, after which it can be difficult to discuss what kind of mediated everyday life is desirable. Any exercise that frees thinking and challenges the imagination will do, but it is vital that the exercise include some kind of orientation towards the future. During the workshop, it is worth recalling the idea of time travel and the fact that the participants have imaginarily moved to the year 2030. When talking about the media, we easily slip into discussing only current mediated everyday life.

The actual game rounds are supposed to be carried out in small groups. Each round is 10 to 15 minutes in duration, so the purpose is not to produce long stories but rather snapshots. The participants should be encouraged to accept that all ideas are good ideas that they should be included in the story, with the imagining continued with them. The groups can use auxiliary questions (see the character sheet) which they can rely on if they want to or if story creation gets stuck. However, the setting created by the playing cards is primarily the one in which the imagination is free to run wild. There are also blank cards to modify the game for a chosen theme.

After each round of imagining, the small groups return to the common space and tell the stories to each other. At best, the discussion about them gives the participants ideas for reflection on their own media use and even for a media-critical assessment. It is therefore worth allocating the same amount of time to the discussion as that devoted to imagining. You can stimulate the discussion by, for example, asking other groups to comment on each story told or by asking questions to the group that presented the story.

The workshop ends with a final reflection, where a specific matter or themes from the stories related to everyday mediated life, as told by the groups, can be brought up for joint reflection, at the facilitator's discretion. Here, too, an image with related questions can serve to spark conversation.

Finally, it's a good idea to let the participants share how they experienced the imagining exercises and the whole workshop. Everyone should have the opportunity to give feedback on the workshop and to verbalise their own experience.

The workshop can also be carried out remotely using a video call application. We have separately described in the exercises how they can work when the workshop is not organised live.

The imagining workshop

1. Tuning exercises

What would you take with you on a time trip to the year 2030?

The participants can be asked during the introduction round or at the beginning of the workshop to say what they would take with them on a time trip to 2030. This exercise stimulates thoughts about traveling to the future but also about the present. The task can be to choose what things or objects from current media-technological everyday life the participants would like to take with them. It's a good idea for the workshop facilitator to start the round so that they become part of the group, and it's easier for the participants to throw themselves into

Time capsule

You can tune in to the theme of the workshop by gathering together a time capsule of everything that is good in today's media-technological everyday life and what you would like to take with you to the mediated everyday life of the future. In a remote workshop, this tuning exercise can be done using the chat, for example by asking all participants to write their object for the time capsule in the chat and sending it at the same moment (when the workshop facilitator asks).

Time trip

Audio-visual content is a good stimulus for imagining the future. You can also go on a time trip more concretely with the help of the following exercise. You can choose videos suitable for your workshop from the playlist, even if you don't do the whole exercise.

For the workshop facilitator to present:

"Dear passengers, welcome to time machine ZX260's journey to the year 2030. Our estimated travel time is X minutes and Y seconds [the total duration of the selected videos]. We expect good travel weather today. For the trip, videos related to your destination have been chosen for your entertainment. They are [a short description, what kind of videos they are, e.g. a commercial by company B and a short film by author Q]. Fasten your seat belt and become comfortable. We hope you enjoy the trip."

Playlist

2. The game

There is no single correct way to play this game, and there are no winners or losers. The idea is to throw yourself into imagining a small scene together: some everyday situation in the day of a game character living in the mediated everyday life of the future.

Needed: character sheets, playing cards (four decks: situation, place, emotional state, what-if), pen and paper and/or a digital ideation platform (e.g. Miro).

1. Choose your teams.

The imagining game is played with teams of 2–4 people.

2. Creating a game character (10–15 min).

Choose one of the three ready-made character images or draw your own character. Give the character a name and briefly describe a) their friends and family, b) their three main traits or characteristics, c) their hobbies and interests, d) the most important things in their current life, and e) their relationship with media technology: is it excited/aware/indifferent/fearful/something else. When the characters are ready, introduce them to the other players.

3. Imagining round 1 (10–15 min).

Each team draws one situation card, one place card, and one what-if card. The teams discuss and develop a short scene or story set in the year 2030 based on the cards. The cards depict the situation and the place where the story begins, and the what-if card describes how a feature of the media landscape has evolved from the current one. When developing the story, you can use the auxiliary questions found on the character sheet as support. Each team writes down the key elements of the story. When the time is up, the groups gather to tell their stories. The teams comment other teams' stories, for example by mentioning the thing that stuck in their mind the most, what in the story made them think, or what they liked the most.

4. Imagining round 2 (10–15 min).

Each team draws one situation card, one location card, and one emotional state card. The round is played in the same way as the first imagining round, but now instead of the what-if card, the emotional state card tells you how the situation feels or how the situation will end. The round ends again with the telling of stories and a discussion about them.

5. A tip to start imagining.

Feel free to throw out the first thoughts, ideas, and images that come to mind. Take each presented idea into the story and move on from there. Have a good trip to 2030!

3. Reflection exercises

What stood out the most?

The stories can be discussed by, for example, letting all the participants share which of the stories made the biggest impression, which had the kind of future that they themselves would most like, or which of the stories had something they would absolutely not want to experience in the future.

Diary

In this exercise, the participants reflect on the stories told and how the character experienced their day.

Each participant writes for a few minutes without stopping the free flow of thoughts about the character's day. The text can be written on a pre-prepared form that has a free text field, either with a pen and paper on your own device as a file. To lower the threshold, it's good practise to indicate that the text is not to be shown to others, but the group can also agree that those who wish can share their texts. As an alternative, the exercise can be done collectively so that the diary entries are created by writing together continuing others' sentences (chain writing). Below is an example of the diary exercise we use:

[Character name] writes a short diary entry about the day. Not everything has gone quite smoothly. Continue the text, letting thoughts flow freely: **[Date in 2030]** Dear diary, today I had enough of all these devices...

A reverse time capsule

The topics discussed in the workshop can be reflected upon by assembling a time capsule from the future to bring back to the present. The participants can think about what in the stories they would want to have in the present day. If the workshop is organised remotely, the ideas can be shared in the chat, for example in the same way as in the tuning exercise's time capsule: everyone writes their answers and sends them at the same time indicated by the facilitator.

Reflection after the workshop

The workshop experience can be discussed with the help of the following questions: How did imagining feel? What do you remember best about the workshop? In a remote workshop, the answers can be written in the chat. If several workshops are to be organised, the participants can be asked for suggestions to improve it.



Device 2030?


What thoughts do you have about future mediated everyday life? What do you think about our relationship with media technology, and what do you imagine it to be like in the future? Questions to consider:


- Has the smartphone become our extension?
- Will this change by 2030?
- What could alternatives be like?


Photo: Jeanne Menjoulet / Flickr



Photo: Piyapong Saydaung / Pixabay

<p>Media/Everyday Life 2030</p>	<p>Team</p>	<p>①</p>
<p>Character</p> 	<p>Name: _____ Age: _____</p> <p>Friends and family: _____</p> <p>Three descriptive features: _____</p> <p>Hobbies and interests: _____</p> <p>Relationship with (media)technology: _____</p>	<p>②</p>
<p>Auxiliary questions to help in narrating</p> <p>What does the character think about the situation?</p> <p>What kind of device(s) and/or applications does the character use, and how?</p> <p>What does the character do first? What happens then? Does the character face problems, or does everything go well? Will something surprising happen? How will the situation end?</p>		

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Place



At a cottage

Place



On a pedestrian street

Place



At home

Place



In a café

Place



On a jogging path

Place



In a library

Place



At a friend's house

Place



In a shopping centre

Place



Place



Place



Place



Situation



A revolutionary scientific discovery is made. How does the character hear about it?

Situation



The character and their friends want to influence something that is important to them. What do they do?

Situation



The feed is broken: updates are unpredictable. What now?

Situation



The character receives a disturbing message. What does the character do?

Situation



Things to do for the weekend in the hometown. Where can one find information?

Situation



Time off. How does the character entertain themselves?

Situation



The character is looking for information for a study assignment. What information and from where?

Situation



Network connections are down. What now?

Situation



You can't say that using your real name! Why and how does the character communicate?

Situation



The national election is approaching, and the voting age is 16. Who to vote for?

Situation



Friends of the character talk about a new communication channel. What is the character going to do?

Situation



What if?



The design of technology and services is guided by people's well-being

What if?



The well-being of people is ignored in the design of technology and services

What if?



Applications and devices make people's everyday lives easier

What if?



Applications and devices control everyday life completely

What if?



The web is an unsafe and unreliable place

What if?



The web is a safe and reliable place

What if?



Tech giants (e.g. Google and Facebook) no longer exist as companies

What if?



Google has a total monopoly in the technology market

What if?



What if?



What if?



What if?



Emotional state



The situation is or will be uncomfortable

Emotional state



The situation is or will be exciting

Emotional state



The situation is or will be inspiring

Emotional state



The situation is or will be confusing

Emotional state



The situation is or will be amusing

Emotional state



The situation is or will be enjoyable

Emotional state



The situation is or will be embarrassing

Emotional state



The situation is or will be threatening

Emotional state



The situation is or will be disturbing

Emotional state



The situation is or will be strange

Emotional state



The situation is or will be...

Emotional state



The situation is or will be...
