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Institutionen för konst, kultur och kommunikation  
Media and Communication Studies Master's Programme  
KK642B Collaborative Media  
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## **Individual reflection of Collaborative Media project**

During the Collaborative Media course I participated in the development of a language service called Språkcaféet Online. The idea behind the platform was to help people with integration in society through language learning. We were five people with different competences creating the service. Reimer and Löwgren (2014) advocate the view that a Collaborative Media is a form of media where users for instance create content together that not a single person can produce. Our platform is built around the concept of everyone participating and thus it is a good example of a Collaborative media.

My primary responsibility during the production was the creation of the visual graphics of the prototype along with the promotional video trailer. Early in the process I tried to explain my skills in video editing to be assigned the task of being the head of producing the promotional video. The trailer was produced with After Effects and Premiere Pro to create an idea of a dynamic and collaborative platform, through the use of animations and voiceover that describes the collaborative functions. My focus with the video production was to give the idea of a dynamic, professional and welcoming service. For instance, an idea from the beginning was to animate the logo to make the steam above our cup moving to make the service feel less static and instead dynamic and open.

The term I usually identify myself with in a group is, the “technical guy”. In my previous studies I’ve encountered the research of Meredith Belbin, where I was identified with the specialist team role. The seven roles describe how a team should be constructed and how people can work together (Belbin, 2000). Since Språkcaféet Online is a collaborative production I believe it is good of having a team of different people with different backgrounds and set of skills.

Technology is a common part of many group projects, and I feel comfortable taking the responsibility for the tech. This is usually something that I feel taking responsibility for could calm the group and make other group members focus on other aspects. Thus, they do not have to worry for not managing some of the most difficult parts, that often are necessary in prototyping.

In my group we had the roles of the theoretical person who was familiar with the background idea who works with integration, the designer who designed most parts of the service, the advertiser who knows how to be seen and the writer who wrote the most texts.

This kind of combined creativity creates a very professional result. For instance, first of our designer made a logotype with the name of the platform and a cup along with steam originating from the cup. Then I used my own creativity to add up to the already created logo to further create dynamics to our trademark. This is the steam moving in the promotional trailer along with some animations to the words in the logo. This minor addition I think is a good example of how the combined creativity creates a dynamic platform.

During the early stages of development, I especially felt I didn't get enough tasks to be part of an equal workload for the group. However, this was later changed when we started the writing of the different aspects, both the text on the website and the final media plan. The main issue were with some people taking on too much work. In this group we were two members who both had background and previous experience with typography, colours and design.

In a group project it is impossible to have a 100 percent equal workload. There will always be someone who takes on more responsibility in the group, and someone else taking less. Our task was as well divided to do our own respective parts. It is a challenge to do everything and be part of every design process. However, as Reimer and Löwgren (2014) suggest a collaborative production is working together to do something not a single person can do alone. This could be one person producing something that is more difficult for example.

It is my belief that good and dynamic group project lifts different skills and personalities in the group. It would be preferred that people are very different, to prevent two competences competing for attention. My skills in video production I still feel are my strongest skills for the production. These are one example of the role of the specialist and completer that are Belbin's (2000) team roles.

When this group work now finished, I think that our prototype shows by itself, the different background that produced it. During the process we discussed how we would like to approach our platform and what role the user should have. Reimer and Löwgren (2014) describe the collaborative media as a form of platform where users engage with the service in both production and

consumption. Our service is built around the idea of letting everyone join. There is not meant to be a certain person that have a higher position, everyone should be on an equal level.

Balsamo (2011) explains how technological innovation is not only produced from the government and large organizations, it is also each individual that makes up and creates the innovation. Without the user's, there would not be a Språkcaféet Online since the platform are designed around the idea of people helping each other.

“We’ve had the internet for forty years now, but Twitter and YouTube are less than five years old, not because the technology wasn’t in place earlier but because society wasn’t ready to take advantage of those opportunities” (Shirky, 2010, p. 210).

The quote from Shirky’s book resembles how important it is for a society to be ready for a new service. The language platform developed shows a similar situation. A few years ago, this may not have been interesting for people, but with the migration between countries increasing our service could now be ready to be launched. With people being more global our approach for a

My ambition and hope are to continue this project in the future.

## References

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