

50 Years of the International Central Institute for Youth and Educational Television [IZI]

It was certainly no April Fool's joke when on 1.4.1965 Christian Wallenreiter, the then director of the Bavarian Broadcasting Corporation (Bayrischer Rundfunk, BR), and television director Prof. Oeller created an institute within the BR for promoting the quality of children's, youth and educational television.

Improving quality by looking beyond one's own productions

Munich, April 1965: The BR's graduate school programme had just got up and running, and the first discussions around setting up a "Telekolleg" (a system of adult distance learning in Germany) were underway. It was not only the first PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL competition that had highlighted the importance of thinking outside the box. The founding fathers' aspirations arose out of the needs of the day: public corporation television – particularly in the area of children, youth and education – had to attune to the current state of knowledge within the research, and continually scientifically reassess whether programmes really were conveying what was intended. And so the International Central Institute for Youth and Educational Television (Internationales Zentralinstitut für das Jugend- und Bildungsfernsehen, IZI) was born.

Documentation, basic and trend research, and, above all, programme consultation

For 50 years the IZI has been documenting the state of research on children's, youth and educational television, and so has been able to establish one of the largest specialist libraries in the world. The IZI evaluates international studies and summarises them for editors in order to build bridges between science and production praxis. In its own research projects the IZI explores the significance of television for young people:

- How do people use television and online services for learning?
- How do toddlers understand programmes?
- Who are boys' and girls' TV heroes and heroines?
- How do adolescents and young adults use television in developing their own identity?

In its trend research, the IZI carries out reception studies on current hits among young target groups from the *Teletubbies* to *Germany's Next Topmodel*. With over 1000 citations in the press every year, the results emerging from these shape the public discourse.

Above all, though, the IZI supports editors in their aspiration for more quality in children's, youth and educational television, looking together for optimal ways in which to implement within programmes the knowledge gained from reception research, pedagogy and psychology. The IZI was involved from the start in programmes such as *Willi wills wissen*, *Die Sendung mit dem Elefanten* or *Grips*, with its reception studies continually offering the opportunity to critically illuminate the programmes from the perspective of the target group.

Press Release

Publications and Conferences

The results of the IZI's work are published in books or the journal *TelevIZion*, which was founded in 1988 and comes out twice a year in German and once a year in English. With 20 international lectures every year, IZI colleagues are part of the international discourse. They bring global knowledge about children's, youth and educational television to Munich, differentiating it through their own praxis-oriented research. The IZI has established itself as "the" central information and research centre for quality in children's, youth and educational television on the television scene, not least through various workshops and masterclasses as well as the annual December conference, which has been held every year since 1999 in the large lecture hall.

The IZI is celebrating its 50th anniversary with this year's December conference on the 8th and 9th of December, entitled "Quality that endures – Fairytales, Classics and the Question of Reception".

If you want to find out more about our work: www.izi.de

You can order *TelevIZion* here for free: <http://www.br-online.de/jugend/izi/deutsch/publikation/televizion/televizion.htm#>

We welcome enquiries in the field of children's, youth and educational television at any time.