TOWARDS MULTILITERACIES AMONG THE YOUNG IN TRANSITIONS OF LEARNING

Sirkku Kotilainen
Ph.D., professor
University of Tampere, Finland
sirkku.kotilainen@uta.fi

Skills in new literacies mark the path of education

- *Horizon Report Europe: 2014 Schools Edition* shows that the levels of digital competence of European children and teenagers are actually inadequate (Johnson et al. 2014).

- Multiliteracies meaning as new literacies integrating textual literacy with multimodal texts in audiovisual and digital formats, have become more important in proceeding in educational pathways and in careers of modern society (eg. Cazden et. Al. 1996).

Transitions of Learning in the Study

- Even a competent young person may lack interest to apply in a school or to find a job after comprehensive school - being at the edge of dropping out of society in Finland.

- The research focuses on young people who are at-risk of drop-outs from education, especially in the transition phase of comprehensive and upper secondary education and soon after, ages 15 – 20.

Multiliteracies as practical pegagogies

Developed by the New London Group 1996, multiliteracies as pedagogies strives towards critical understanding of sociocultural phenomenons. Starting from the familiar, it moves to an analytic distanced caze to the cultural product and, then redesign of it, as remaking of a cultural product (Cazden et. Al. 1996)

Practise-based research with young people in 2015 - 2017

Young People in the Limelight: Towards Agency through Multiliteracy - study aims to understand the pedagogic challenges of young people in literacies and participation.

Moreover, the research is aiming to develop media education which gives young people at risk of drop-outs a voice and, increases their agency in their own lives, in relations with media (digital learning material as a result as well).

Research Questions

- How artistic media workshops can support young people to participate in a society, as agents in relations with mediated publicity?

- How artistic media workshops develop mediated multiliteracies of the young?

- How youngsters can be encouraged to take part in the research as co-researchers?

Action Research through Workshops

Totally five (5) workshops with different kinds of youth groups form sub projects as action research (postdoc research, doctoral studies and master thesis), Starting mainly in September 2015. (eg. Reason and Bradbury 2006).

Pretest workshop the 23th – 25th June 2015.

Design research as well: developing models and learning Material (eg. Edelson 2002; designresearchsociety.org)

Map of
Finland

Workhops (5):

Multia:
Theater and media

Tampere (2):
Photography

Tornio:
Film and video

Vantaa:
Creative writing in
social media

Participatory methodological development

Additional to traditional researcher – based methods like diaries, interviews, questionnaires, the project is developing co-research with the young participants, for example:

- young people interviewing each other
- youngsters as authors in some publications
- young people as public presentators in conferences

(Bradbury-Jones & Taylor 2015; Mallan et al. 2010)

The young are seen as participants in a society

The young are seen in this study as potential actors for responsible citizenships in societies instead of seeing them only as becoming citizens in future (Bennett 2008).

Agency is considered here following Lois McNay (2004, 183-185) as living through contradictory and alive subject positions, here youth activities and experiences in media cultures which may lead also productive and performative human agencies (Sanjay Asthana 2012).

References

- Asthana, Sanjay (2012) *Youth media imaginaries from around the world.* New York: Peter Lang.

- Bennett, Lance W. (2008) 'Changing Citizenship in the Digital Age', in W. L. Bennet (ed.) Civic Life Online: Learning How Digital Media Can Engage Youth.. Cambridge: The MIT Press, MA, pp. 1-24.

- Bradbury-Jones, Caroline; &Taylor, Julie (2015) Engaging with children as co-researchers: challenges, counter challenges and solutions. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology.* 18(2) , 161-173.

- Cazden, C.; Cope, B.; Fairclough, N.; Gee, J.; et al (1996) A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures. *Harward Educational Review*, 66:1, 60-92.

- Edelson, D. C. (2002) Design Research: What We Learn When We Engage in Design. *The Journal of Learning Sciences*, 11:1, 105-121.

- Mallan, Kerry Margaret, Singh, Parlo and Giardina, Natasha (2010) The challenges of participatory research with 'tech-savvy' youth. *Journal of Youth Studies.* 13 (2), 255-272.

- Johnson, L.; Adams Becker, V.; Freeman, A.; Kampylis, P.; Vuorikari, R. & Punie, Y. (2014) *Horizon Report Europe: 2014 Schools Edition*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union & Austin: The New Media Consortium. Available: https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/default/files/2014-nmc-horizon-report-eu-en_online.pdf

- McNay, Lois (2004). 'Agency and Experience: gender as a lived relation.' In Adkins, Lisa & Skeggs, Beverly (eds.) Feminism after Bourdieu. Oxford: Balckwell.

- Reason, P. & Bradbury, H. (eds.) *Handbook of Action Research. The Concise Paperback Edition*. London: SAGE, 94-105.

- Siivonen, K.; Kotilainen, S. & Suoninen, A. (2011) Iloa ja voimaa elämään. *Nuorten taiteen tekemisen merkitykset Myrsky-hankkeessa*. Helsinki: Nuorisotutkimusverkosto ja Nuorisotutkimusseura.