Once Upon a Tablet: A School Toy in the Making

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# Abstract

The current paper introduces the definitions of playful literacy and multimodal hyper-intertextuality, key concepts when researching children’s use of digital tablets. The pilot investigation, which took place in spring 2014 in Denmark, is part of a larger cross-cultural comparative project exploring what emergent behaviors are present when preschool children use and play with tablets in their formal learning environments. In order to map the array of play and usage of such devices for this research, after the first round of observations, the tablet taxonomy was outlined and has been applied as a guide for the subsequent rounds of data collection. The proposed definitions are a valuable contribution to the field of multisensory interfaces, due to their pervasiveness on digital mobile platforms.

# Outcome

"The current paper contributes to the field of multisensory interfaces by introducing two key points that emerged from the pilot study regarding children’s playful interactions with tablets. Acknowledging the role of fun within modes of interaction informs and broadens the field of multisensory interfaces. The concepts of playful literacy and multimodal hyper-intertextuality, which emerged from the analysis of the observations, challenge existing definitions of digital and media literacy while covering the close interaction and interrelations between modes of use of portable devices, their associated apps and their actual praxis."