Unpacking Emergent Teaching Practices with Digital Technology

# Details

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* Literacy and skills
* Internet usage, practices and engagement
* Digital and socio-cultural environment

## Sample

Three elementary schools in Sweden.

## Implications For Educators About

* Digital citizenship
* Professional development
* Other
* STEM Education
* School innovation

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Researchers

# Abstract

What changes when digital technology is used in the classroom, and how do we identify these changes? These questions motivated the present study, which sought to contribute to the discourse on the digitalization of schools from the perspective of teachers’ everyday practice. The analysis was grounded in the scrutiny of 11 semi-structured interviews and field notes stemming from ethnographic observations carried out in classrooms, breaks, and teachers’ workshops. The data were analyzed in terms of materials, competences, meanings, and experiential qualities (i.e., referring to how certain properties of a digital design are experienced in use). The experiential qualities that emerged from the analysis of the data show an interrelation between the elements of practice; in particular, they reflect a visible, problem-solving and adaptive teaching practice that develops with the use of digital technologies in the classroom. Such a practice is characterized as effective, evidence-based, and liberated from time and space communication. The implications of these findings are discussed in relation to, the emergence of the teachers’ practice of experimenting with the digital materials, and the emergence of a managerial communication practice in the elementary school. The chapter contributes to the discussion of the tensions between incremental and radical changes in teaching with digital technologies and offers an elaboration of the relevance of a lens on practice in studies about technology and education.

# Outcome

"The study shows the emergence of two main practices that characterize the ongoing process of digitalization in the schools studied: (1) the teachers’ experimentation with digital materials, which contributes to visible, prob- lem-solving and adaptive teaching practice; (2) the teachers’ managerial communi- cation, which is effective, evidence based, and liberated from time and space communication in the school.... [T]he study draws attention to a teaching practice that takes advantage of the interactive and multimodal affordances of the digital materials, introduces vari- ety in learning, but resists engaging with the deeper pedagogical changes that may be linked to the learners’ and digital material’s new agency in the digitalized school. The study also points to new values underpinning communication in the school that seem to be linked to customer service rather than learner-centered communication.... [A] lens on school practices and their material conditions contributes to a shift from an exclusive focus on the effects of digital technologies on learning toward other aspects, such as the social, value-laden and organizational aspects, which are also constitutive of school practices, school knowledge and learning.... [W]hile the teachers’ experimentation with technologies represents incre- mental changes in their teaching practice, the emergent managerial communication seems to challenge the cultures and ethos of Nordic schools. " (Author, 34-35, 48-49)