

# YOUNG PEOPLE, MEDIA LITERACIES AND MOBILE DEVICES: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

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## ABSTRACT

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The aim of this paper is to analyse children's and teen's participation in global and local media communities when they use technology creatively and intelligently, interacting with both peers and adults. We examine media literacy understood as particular competencies involving critical thinking, cultural dispositions and tastes and creativity, all of them related to old and new media. The methodological approach adopted is ethnography, combined with action research. Five workshops were carried out for children and teens aged between 6 and 14. The average number of children and youths attending the workshop ranged from 15 to 20 participants. The data analysis combines a narrative and conceptual approach supported by qualitative software analysis. The results are oriented in three directions: 1. it is not easy for children to establish relationships between local and Internet media communities. The need to share their goals and to search for instruments that will allow them to achieve those goals is revealed as something necessary to build bridges between them; 2. it is necessary to control different dimensions of multimodal discourses in order to be able to generate and transmit meaningful messages while taking the audience into account, and 3. the roles played by children and adults were different but complementary. The adults organised and developed the experience, guiding and accompanying teens throughout the process, while the children opened new paths and generated new shared interests.

## KEYWORDS

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Children and teens, digital literacy, multimodality, online and offline communities, adult-child, peer

## SOMMARIO

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Lo scopo di questo articolo è di analizzare la partecipazione di bambini e adolescenti nelle comunità mediali globali e locali quando usano la tecnologia in modo creativo e intelligente, interagendo sia con i pari che con gli adulti. Prendiamo in esame la media literacy intesa come insieme di specifiche competenze implicanti il pensiero critico, le disposizioni culturali, gusti e la creatività, con riferimento sia ai vecchi che ai nuovi media. L'approccio metodologico adottato è l'etnografia in combinazione con la ricerca-azione. Sono stati realizzati cinque laboratory con bambini e adolescenti di età compresa tra 6 e 14 anni. Il numero medio di partecipanti andava dai 15 ai 20 partecipanti. L'analisi dei dati integra un approccio narrativo e con uno concettuale attraverso il supporto di un software di analisi qualitativa. I risultati sono orientati in tre direzioni: 1. non è facile per i bambini a stabilire relazioni tra comunità locali e le comunità mediali online. La necessità di condividere i loro obiettivi e di cercare strumenti che permetteranno loro di raggiungere tali obiettivi si è rivelata come qualcosa di necessario per costruire ponti tra loro; 2. è necessario controllare le diverse dimensioni dei discorsi multimodali per essere in grado di generare e trasmettere messaggi significativi, tenendo in considerazione il pubblico; e 3. i ruoli svolti da bambini e adulti erano diversi ma complementari. Gli adulti hanno organizzato e sviluppato l'esperienza, guidando e accompagnando gli adolescenti nel corso del processo, mentre i bambini hanno aperto nuove strade e generato nuovi interessi condivisi.

## PAROLE CHIAVE

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Bambini e adolescenti, digital literacy, multimodalità, comunità online e offline, adulto-bambino, pari

## 1 Introduction

Technology is an essential element to think, communicate and act in the 21st Century. The use of new smart tools such as phones and tablets and new media (i.e. social networks) opens up new possibilities for connection and for the generation of new digital scenarios (Goggin & Hjorth, 2014; Urry, 2000). Screens and images on digital networks have given rise to a new landscape which demands new communication skills that need to be learned when people participate in local and the Internet communities (Böck, Pachler, & Kress, 2013).

In this context, we are interested in studying how children and young people use technology creatively and intelligently participating in a media landscape supported by digital environments and interacting with both peers and adults. In relation to this overall objective, the following specific objectives have been realised:

- to examine children's and youth participation in global and local media communities around non-formal educational scenarios.
- to analyse the acquisition process of new media literacy, related to the use of multimodal discourses in these scenarios.
- to explore the role of adults and peers in support situations for the acquisition of new media literacy.

These pages are part of a larger study that analyses the activities of young people when using mobile devices in non-formal educational settings. The work is divided into three parts. The first part provides the theoretical model adopted, in which contributions from socio-cultural psychology are combined with the concept of community of practice and with media studies that rely on the notion of participatory culture. From this double perspective, we look at the role of adults and peers as mediating elements in scenarios promoting media literacy. Secondly, the methodological approach is presented, largely based on ethnography and combined with action research. Finally, the third part of the paper presents the results obtained in relation to the proposed objectives. We will show the process through which online and offline communities are gradually constructed through activities that involve accepting shared goals and acting jointly to achieve them.

## 2 Theoretical background

The presence of new technologies in people's lives offers multiple communication possibilities and transforms the way that information and knowledge are received, exchanged and disseminated. Media literacy is necessary to control multi-modal languages, as present in old and new media, always complementary and not mutually exclusive. Adults and peers can support each other in reading the media messages and in the creation of these new discourses. Figure 1 shows the concepts that organise our theoretical model.

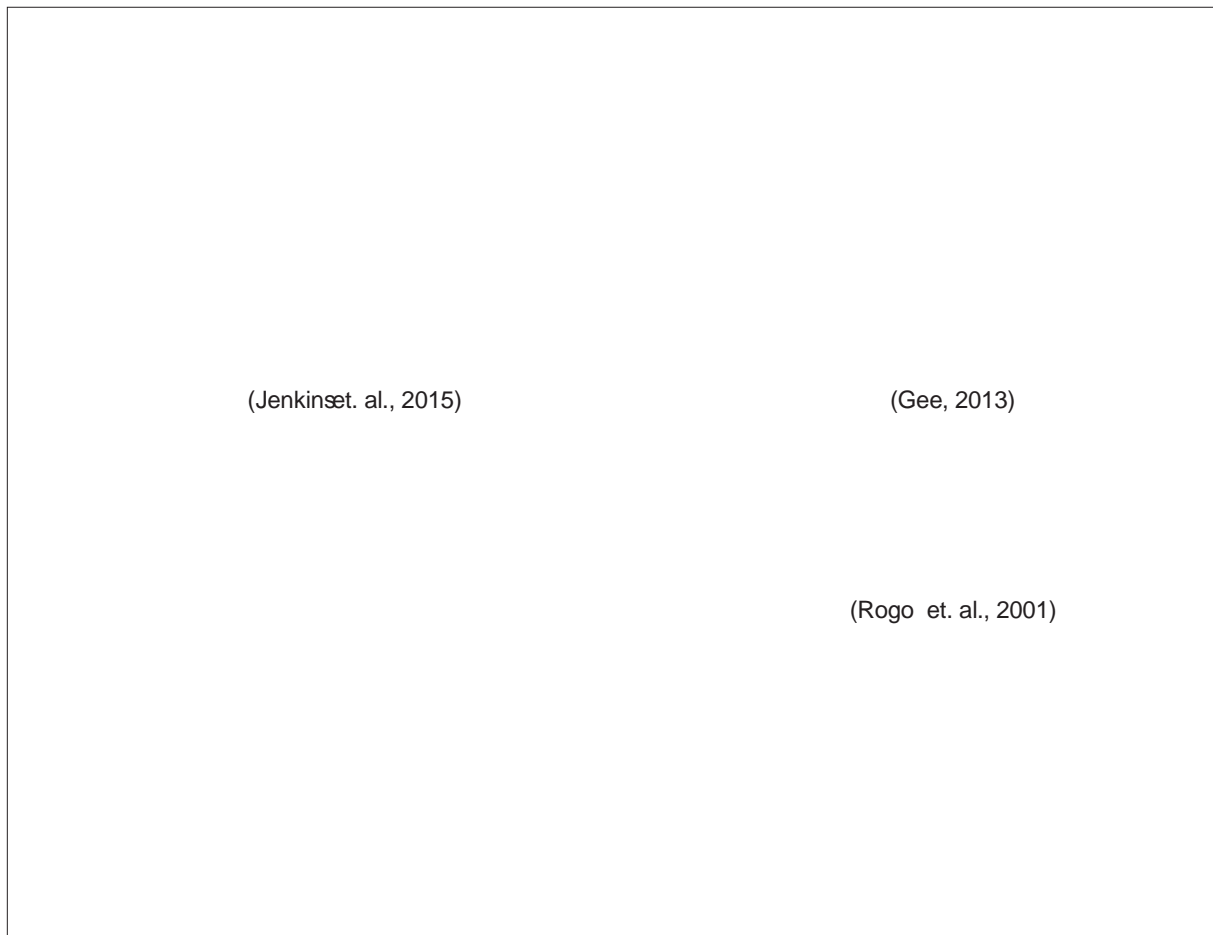


Fig. 1 Theoretical model

## 2.1 Local and internet communities: online and offline environments

What is a community? How to build a community? Those who have tried to answer these questions converge in pointing out that people normally belong to groups with which they share values, goals and ways of acting. From an anthropological approach, we consider the work of Lave (2011) and Lave & Wenger (1991) focused on the notion of 'communities of practice'. Focusing on the activity theory, the work of Mwanza & Engeström (2003) is relevant to understand the relationships between the community and the cultural tools. We approach the concept of community from a double perspective, global and local.

The global community is understood as a public space mediated by mobile and digital instruments which generates new discourses that open up new possibilities to rebuild everyday life (Caron & Caronia, 2007). These mobile tools are integrated into everyday practices and contribute to achieve common goals and to generate a sense of belonging to the community (Horst & Miller, 2006). Moreover, there is a sense of privacy in them, defined not as a fixed state, but both fluid and contingent on personal, historic, cultural and socio-technical cir-

cumstances (Hjorth & Arnold, 2013). While individuals participate in global communities, their behaviours are not homogeneous, they are conditioned by the sense of belonging. (Hinton & Hjorth, 2013).

The work of Barbara Rogoff (Correa-Chavez, Mejia-Arauz, & Rogoff, 2015; Rogoff, Turkanis, & Bartlett, 2001), from developmental psychology, is inspiring to define local communities. The most salient features of a community would be the following: 1. there is a sense of belonging to the group. This does not exclude the differences between its members; 2. in a community, there is «face to face» interaction taking place on a daily basis and organised around common goals, and 3. the community is a group capable of reflecting on itself. In this sense, we can say that communities are self-reflexive. If these conditions aren't met, the interaction cannot occur in a vacuum.

The technological and digital changes we're experiencing in our society mean both the local and digital dimensions of the community should be taken into account, linked to the offline and online worlds. In both cases, communities are supported by the active participation of its members and the joint construction of meaning (Fiore, 2007). The inclusion of social networks and mobile devices offer the possibility of experiencing differently in both time and space, resulting in a new way of interpreting reality and experiences when moving to virtual spaces. Participation in interactive online communities is associated with a set of cultural practices that allow for immediacy and immersion in a virtual world through creative participation and interaction with other people with whom knowledge is shared (Papacharissi, 2011; Boyd, 2014).

How to participate in this form of culture? What roles to adopt? How to learn in this new context? These questions generate new educational challenges in the context of a global society.

## 2.2 Media literacy, digital tools, and multimodal discourses

In this paper, following Burn (2009) and Buckingham (2009), we consider media literacy as a set of particular competencies, involving critical thinking, cultural dispositions and tastes, and creativity, all of them related to old and new media. Moreover, we approach media literacy as the ability of people to consciously control the rules of multimodal discourses used on the Internet (Barnes, 2013; Barton & Lee, 2013). In addition to this, a person can be considered as literate not only when he/she consciously controls certain aspects of the speech that he/she uses but rather, when he/she understands that all messages have a recipient (Livingstone, 2008). Communicating online and offline, being literate when communication is mediated by multiple technologies, including digital tools (Ito, 2013), means to possess certain skills that allow for constructions of meaning shared with other members of the community (Cortesi & Gasser, 2015).

Digital technologies, when used as communication tools, extend the power of expression and creation in online and offline communities. The concept of new

literacy is currently used associated with these practices (Gee, 2014; Lacasa, 2013). These are skills that allow people to express, publish, produce and not just consume written texts, images, sounds or any other mode of expression that allows us to encode the information (Kress, 2003). These capacities are also associated with new practices within the framework of participatory culture.

All things considered, children and young people live in scenarios mediated by technological tools such as mobile devices used in communication or social networking environments to understand and transform the world (Katz, 2008). We may wonder to what extent is the presence of these new technological environments needed to communicate and express ourselves through digital tools. Everyday reality, even the inequalities regarding the use of the Internet (Lange, 2014), show the need to create spaces for new literacies that will allow us to become aware of the specific discourse of the technological tools we use.

### 2.3 The role of adults and peers: support contexts

The acquisition of literacy forms understood as skills that allow for participation in local and Internet communities mediated by technology requires learning processes. Becoming aware of the discourse used is not a simple task, we can generally accept that teaching and learning processes are necessarily related to new literacies. That is, the communities formed in these technological environments, such as social network sites, and creation processes using new codes of expression require learning processes. This is the framework for exploring the role of adults and peers.

There are different models when it comes to establishing support to the activities performed by children and teens when facing a networked community. In order to differentiate it, it is necessary to address the roles of teachers and learners in the community of practice, which can involve different ways of participation in the community. Therefore, we should look at three different perspectives (Lacasa, 2013; Rogoff, Matusov, & White, 1996):

- Focusing on the adult, responsible for providing the learner with the knowledge which he/she lacks. In addition to this, it is the teacher who organises the way of transmitting knowledge, manages the situation and takes control of progress at work.
- Focusing on the child, who discovers the reality himself/herself through interaction with his/her peers. Learners are considered as active agents who inquire into reality. The role of the adult is less comprehensive.
- A learners' community in which all participants have their own responsibility.

In this study, the researchers placed themselves in a model in which the roles of young people and adults are different but complementary, in which a collaborative model is a given. The adult plays a supporting role and facilitates meta-reflection processes through guided participation in the tasks they all face jointly. In this context, the communication between children and adults involves



two processes from the adult: on the one hand, building bridges between different communicative contexts and, on the other, structuring and organising the information. The role of young people can also be related to the introduction of new situations and work areas, often unknown by adults, as well as to forms of peer education through discourses which contain information appealing to teens' interests.

According to the goals pursued, in this work we are faced with a learners' community characterised by processes in which children have an active participation role and where adults accompany them through guided participation processes. This idea, conceived by authors such as Barbara Rogoff and her collaborators, is essential to understand the role of adults in non-formal learning situations (Correa-Chávez et al., 2015; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003). From their point of view, people learn in both symmetrical and asymmetrical social relations, and each person plays a different role. To help us understand the process, they outline an interesting metaphor centered around experts and novices which is common in daily working situations: People learn by watching other people's activities and by putting them into practice, and therefore have complementary responsibilities.

### 3 Methodological approach, context and procedure

We adopt an ethnographic perspective (Delgado, 2015; Pink, Horst, Hjorth, Lewis, & Tacchi, 2015) combined with an action-research approach (Reason & Bradbury, 2008; Wells, 2009).

From an ethnographic point of view, we assume that human activities make sense in the social, cultural and historical framework in which they emerge. We analyse the literacy skills related to particular practices, mediated by technology in their social and cultural contexts (Boellstorff et al., 2012; Pink, Ardevol, & Lanzeni, 2016.) If we look at the concept of new literacies, the contributions of Burn (2009) are relevant when he distinguishes between processes and products; in this paper we focus on the analysis of the process rather than on the products. In any case, the final productions of the students, associated to particular practices, must be examined in the dynamic context where they were created.

In addition, this work is inspired by the action research approach, considering that doing research is an agent of social transformation. Action research activities aim to contribute to human development, guided by an intellectual orientation that supports emancipatory, critical and participatory design (Bradbury, 2015). Moreover, we consider critical participatory action research as «a collaborative commitment to engaging in iterative cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting to address untoward consequences of social practices, often rooted in global concerns» (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014, loc. 313 Kindle Ed.).

Focusing on the procedure, this research is part of a larger project aimed at promoting children and teens' new literacies by designing innovation workshops

in non-formal educational environments (Lacasa, de la Fuente, & Martín-Garido, 2016a; 2016b). Five workshops were carried out for children and teens aged between 6 and 14. The average number of children and teens attending the workshop was 15 to 20 participants. The evidence was collected by qualitative research techniques such as observation, conversation and descriptive analysis, and we combined a narrative and a conceptual approach (Brennen, 2013; Gee, 2014) supported by qualitative software analysis (NVivo, 11.1.1 for Mac supported the transcription process) and professional tools (Adobe Lightroom and Final Cut Pro). To explore the Instagram productions, we used web access through Iconsquare (<https://pro.iconsquare.com/myprofile#media>).

We will show the work results exploring both the workshop development process as well as the products generated in the context where they were produced. Both reflect how children use multimodal discourses (Jewitt, 2013) supported by adults and peers (Correa-Chávez et al., 2015) in innovative environments de- V L J Q H G W R S U R P R W H Q H Z O L W H U D F L H V - H Q N L Q V in exploring how participants are present in local and Internet communities when Instagram is used as a mediating instrument between the two (Butsch & Livingstone, 2013). The conversations that took place in the workshops contributed to generate awareness processes of the discourses that were used (Gee, 2014).

Table 1 schematically shows the phases that usually appeared during the workshop.

TABLE 1.  
Workshop phases

	PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3
Activities	To build a local and online community to be able to participate in global online communities	To develop digital literacy through photography and its publication in Instagram	To facilitate awareness through reflection: editing, tagging and publishing productions
Educational goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To generate common goals</li> <li>- To understand the task at hand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creators in a digital scenario</li> <li>- Digital photography as a cultural practice</li> <li>- Understanding multimedia language and awareness of the audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Help awareness</li> <li>- Organizing tasks</li> <li>- Open new areas of interest</li> </ul>
Type of participation	Adults and children talk in a large group	Adults and children work together in small groups	Adults and children perform activities in large and small groups

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## 4 Main results

We will now look at the process that took place throughout the workshop to show the results obtained in relation to each of the objectives, which we will discuss in the light of the proposed theoretical framework.

### 4.1 Phase 1: building local and internet communities

Sharing goals and values might be among the most relevant features of a community (Lave, 2011), and this is what the adults who organised the workshop wanted to achieve from the start. Let's look at an example of the strategies used by the adult when looking for children to share their interest and motivation around a specific topic by appealing to very specific activities. This will lay the foundations for achieving this goal.

Fragment 1. First moments: looking for a common goal. 2014 11 22

- Adult: Well, guys, as we don't know each other too well we are going to introduce ourselves [All workshop participants are introduced].
- Adult: Today we'll be working with Instagram. Have you heard of it? How many of you have an Instagram account?
- Teens: Me.
- Adult: What about you, do you like taking pictures with your mobile phone?
- Teens: Yes.
- Adult: Also, are you registered on social networks such as Facebook and the like? In these networks, there are two things that matter the most: The photos we take and the people who see them. Am I making myself clear?
- Teens: Yes.

By looking at this transcript, we can see how the adult began to lay the foundations of a local community where adults and children began to share a goal: to work with Instagram. Dialogue, maintained through personal face-to-face interaction, was the support on which it first leaned. Advancing in the conversations was not a simple process. Opinions are asked and no judgment is passed. The starting point are very specific activities close to youth interests, for example, taking good photographs (Katz, 2008). Specific topics are very close to their world, and their use gives good results when it comes to generating intelligent dialogues (Kress, 2010).

Gradually, the adult introduced those resources and ideas on which they would work. For instance, the adult showed several times that pictures can be taken on social networks for people to see them. A global community starts to appear. Papacharissi's (2011) contributions are relevant when considering that it

is possible to participate in virtual spaces from the social interaction that occurs in the local community. Through these early dialogues, children and teens will make the ideas and previous knowledge which they brought to the workshop explicit, for example, about the Internet and the use of mobile and social networks (Katz, 2008).

The goals start to take shape, and the adult's role is essential to build the community both locally and globally. His/her interventions show a concern about people becoming gradually aware of why they perform the different activities. Thus, this contributes to generate a self-reflexive community.

#### Fragment 2. Towards a self-reflexive community

Adult: Does anyone know why we are recording what we're doing? I wanted to tell you that we are doing a study to see how girls and boys access the Internet and learn how to use technology, so that people are not afraid of it, what do you think?

[...]

Boy: You use a few words to label the Instagram photos to make it easier to search for them.

Adult: For example, we have #instakids14 [...] Look, what we're going to do now is this: 1) Take photos; 2) Upload them to Instagram, and 3) Improve and label them.

The adult insisted on what the objective was: to find out how children access the Internet and learn the technology. We can see the importance of the digital scenarios designed to learn, and the fact that young people are aware of the discourses used on the Internet (Gee, 2013). In addition, he/she needed to ensure that children understood what was about to happen as a path to self-reflection. The previous dialogue shows that children had understood the adults' goals and they began to share them, while the researchers seek to get close to the young people's interests, who had previously mentioned that they came to the workshop to learn how to take good photos.

It's interesting to see how relevant concepts for the community such as collective identity on the network are generated from these reflections, supported by the fact of being able to share hashtags. More specifically, this occurred when we discussed tagging the photos with the hashtag #instakids14. This is a way to

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Moreover, it should be noted that, in order to build a local community, it is not only important to maintain a face-to-face dialogue, but also the layout of the physical space, which facilitates symmetrical relationships among participants. We became aware of this throughout the sessions. For example, Figure 2 shows how the adult is sitting on the floor, on the same level as the children. These conditions facilitated the construction of a local community, which gradually led to the construction of a global community.

Fig. 2 Building a community: the role of physical space

To sum up, building a community requires shared goals, interpersonal relationships and self-reflection processes. We must admit that it was easier to generate a local community than encouraging an awareness of the global community, this is why new strategies present in specific practices such as using iPads were necessary. Young people's activity on the Internet gradually contributed to generate awareness of participation in the global community. That is, once they understood what the common goal to be pursued was, it was time to work on ideas that were transmitted to an online community (Barnes, 2013).

## 4.2 Phase 2: to develop new literacies

We already pointed out that we understand new literacies as particular competencies where critical thinking, cultural influence and creativity are fundamental aspects (Burn, 2009; Buckingham, 2009). Moreover, this is a process through which people become aware of the discourses they use (Barnes, 2013; Barton & Lee, 2013; Gee, 2013), where users assume that their messages are oriented to particular audiences (Livingstone, 2008). In our case, the activities that facilitated it are closely related to the practical activities involving the use of software and hardware (Katz, 2008). The strategies used in the workshop are usually discovered during the second phase. After a first phase in which all participants are part of a large group and where, through the conversations, interests are shared as well as an attitude towards learning, there was a second one that developed in small group situations to encourage personalised work. The criteria to form the groups was age, friendly relations and technology knowledge.

This is the framework provided for the children to learn digital photography in a practical way and become information creators (Butsch, 2011) by actively participating in this experience mediated by technological instruments. The adult supported the work without impositions. The goal was to generate a flexible learning in which aspects related to both the communicative situation itself and the technical issues that facilitated it came into play (Rowell, 2013). The

importance of technical aspects for both children and adults becomes apparent in the following example. Children want to act, they are impatient, and adults invite them to use technology reflexively by developing critical thinking as a way to advance in acquiring new literacies.

Fragment 3: Conversation about the task to be carried out

- Girl 1: What are we going to do now?
- Adult 1: Well, now we're going to take photos around the building, okay? We will get organised and you can all take the photos you like with the iPads you have.
- Adult 2: [...] You have to think before you «shoot», you have to think a little and focus so that they won't be blurred, you can zoom in...

In the following transcript, from the summary of one of the adults who participated in the workshop, we can see how the fact that young people began to build digital content was more complex than it seemed. This is a creative process related to a reflection process that promotes literacy and a conscious use of discourses.

Fragment 4: The adult reflects about the children's activities

We are about to tour the building trying to get the girls take their photos. Obviously, the iPad makes them want to photograph everything they see as soon as it is in their hands. Even when a group member notices a specific element, the rest discover it and also try to photograph it. We remind them how important it is to focus on the objective, on the relationship between space and people. They find it hard to reflect on the photos that they take, that's why we intervened, for them to think before they took any pictures.

As can be seen in this fragment, when it comes to understanding the power of images, it is necessary to note that when a boy or a girl picks up a camera their first impulse is to shoot continuously and not look at anything specific. When a teen has a camera, he/she wants to show lots of images from the very first moment. These are cultural practices, supported by cultural tools, and associated to specific and new literacy skills. In this case, it was necessary to redirect the gaze of the participants through a collaboration between them (Ito, 2013). Their environment was to become the first source of inspiration. The adult often reminded them about the goal of the activity, trying not to get in their way. Managing participation in a reflexive and critical way can contribute to the awareness that taking pictures is a creative activity that requires mastering certain discourses (Lacasa, 2013).

What we mean is that children have an active role, they have gone from consuming to producing and creating through different codes such as image and written text. The adult tries to create an environment in which freedom and control become complementary dimensions. In Figure 3, we can see what the support and help of adults was like. Together they explored space, took photographs and reflected about the activity.

Fig. 3 The role of the adult within the small group

We have pointed out that literacy development is linked to a reflection process on the discourses used (Gee, 2013). The process, in the case of the workshop, was developed from a double dimension. On the one hand, it was necessary to become aware of the audience present in the online community (Livingstone, 2008); on the other, controlling certain aspects of audiovisual language considering many aesthetic aspects as pragmatic and rhetorical was necessary to achieve it. We can see it through the example shown in Figure 4.

Fig. 4 Opposed planes in the productions. Gipikids 3 and 10, 2014 11 22

Let us reflect on what the message was. This is one of the key dimensions of literacy processes, which cannot be separated from communicative or expressive contexts. In this case, we were trying to generate a shared message (Cortesi & Gasser, 2015). In the previous productions we can see two examples of how children sought to establish a contrast between «near» and «far» in their photographs by considering different planes and establishing contrasts between them. Another interesting topic would be the people or the objects in the foreground. Once again, dialogue played a key role in this process, as it allowed to make the meaning of messages explicit (Lacasa et al., 2016a).

Let's go back to Figure 4 and have a look at the elements that needed to be considered in relation to multimodal discourse (Barton & Lee, 2013). In this case we talked about the importance of light, the lines and the colour (Favero, 2014). The latter is often modified through the filters found in applications and the different

planes that appear in photographs. Making the children aware of the dimensions of discourse used to make their creations was a priority aspect in this experience. New skills related to media literacy must be developed. On the one hand, different semiotic codes such as written texts and images are combined, and once they manage to master them it is possible to construct meaning (Jewitt, 2008). On the other hand, new social and cultural contexts need to be considered (Kress, 2010).

Although it was a difficult process, these examples show the path followed to achieve this objective, taking a photo with different planes and establishing contrasts between them to transmit a message. More specifically, we are talking about two different images, each capturing two scenes by using very different resources. This shows the endless possibilities offered by the language of image once the children have acquired some basic knowledge about multimedia discourses. The children gradually began to understand the elements and rules present in these new discourses.

Summing up, media literacy means understanding that messages have a recipient and, also, controlling the multi-modal resources used to generate them. These new abilities allow us to share constructions of meaning with other members of the community. This could be considered as a strategy for helping young people to gradually become aware of their creations. For example, sharing their photographs on Instagram and discussing them at the workshop will allow them to establish relationships between local and Internet communities. Depending on the quality of the messages, which obviously have a recipient, near or far, different responses are obtained, sometimes in the form of

#### 4.3 Phase 3: the adult's role – raising awareness through reflection

We have repeatedly said that, in many cases, the presence of children in the workshop was related to their desire to publish good pictures. They wanted to learn from each other and also from adults (Rogoff, 2012). Now we'll see some of these interactions taking place to facilitate learning.

The third phase of the workshop usually involves going back to the large group situation. It is in this context that we will look at the interaction between participants as supports in learning. The activities that we will comment on are related to the need to provide supports in relation to technical aspects that facilitate the communication and that young people are often unaware of. Coupled with this, the tools appear, namely, applications needed to edit the photos, tag them and publish them on Instagram; this is where young people are often more expert than adults. Therefore, we will focus on how the roles of teachers and learners are exchanged between children and adults.

##### Fragment 5: Guidelines to start editing the productions

Adult Now, what we will do is learning how to edit photographs. As there are people here of such different ages, I am going to give a very general explanation and then we'll gather in small groups, okay? There, you'll see what I mean in more detail.



The adult gives the necessary guidelines to organise the workshop, we can see how his functions are progressively integrated in small and large groups. A complementary strategy was used for this purpose: first, general notions were given and, second, every adult gave indications to his/her group. Let's see an example of this process in small groups.

Fragment 6: Editing in small groups (Researcher summary)

When we started learning how to edit, one of the girls showed a lot of interest as she had never done it before and required a lot of help from me. But soon she started selecting photos, using applications and editing them. I tried to talk about it, but she often acted by trial and error, testing and choosing. The most interesting thing is that I think this workshop is opening up lots of possibilities for her, she likes to see photos of others on Instagram. When she uploads her photos, she is surprised that once tagged, her own work appears along with that of other people she's never met. She becomes aware of the audience and the people who share her interests.

The previous fragment is taken from one of the researchers' summaries, where she reflects on how the workshop is helping a child. By her words we can see the importance of awareness in order to use the elements in the network (Gee, 2013; Ito et al., 2013; Lange, 2014). The editing and labeling processes require an understanding of the media messages they are using, in this case, editing applications and social network Instagram. It is not a simple process and, as can be seen in the example, the kids often try to get what they want. The messages created (DWHG KDYH D UHFLSLHQW WKH\ DUH DGGUHVHVG 2015) and with which the meaning of the productions created will be shared. The adult tries for the girl to understand the different implications of the task at hand and she does not hesitate to try to organise the information she is giving her. For example, the girl becomes aware of the audience and the people who share her interests.

Fig. 5 The role played by the adult when interacting with the child

Internalising the sequence of actions (taking pictures, editing, labeling and publishing) makes it possible to make sense of the tasks performed without ever forgetting that the message must be relevant for those who receive it.

Another aspect to take into account is peer support and how teens teach adults. We have already mentioned that this was more common on certain tech-

nical aspects, almost always related to iPad applications. In the example below, we worked with the appPicsArts (<https://t.co/hL1CJBkl8P>).

Fragment 7: Peer support in the editing process

- Girl 2: To insert text, effects, filters, drawings...  
Adult 1: Why do we edit (with PicsArt)? What is your purpose when you edit?  
Girl 2: I do it for the photo to be better.  
Adult 1: And why do you write text?  
Girl 2: In order to let people know where I am.

As we can see, to make editing possible using different types of applications the children must be aware of all the possibilities available to them. In the above example, PicsArt was mentioned. This application helps you become aware of the expressive and communicative content of photography. It was selected among others used in the workshops because it was suggested by children. With it you can edit numerous special effects and it lets you share the creations on social networks.

Once the photographs were edited, and before publishing them, two steps were necessary: 1. Tagging photos by using a hashtag, which helps children become aware of a global audience in an online community; and 2. Writing a title and a comment to help share the creation with the viewers. This helps to raise awareness of the concept of creation as such, authorship and audience.

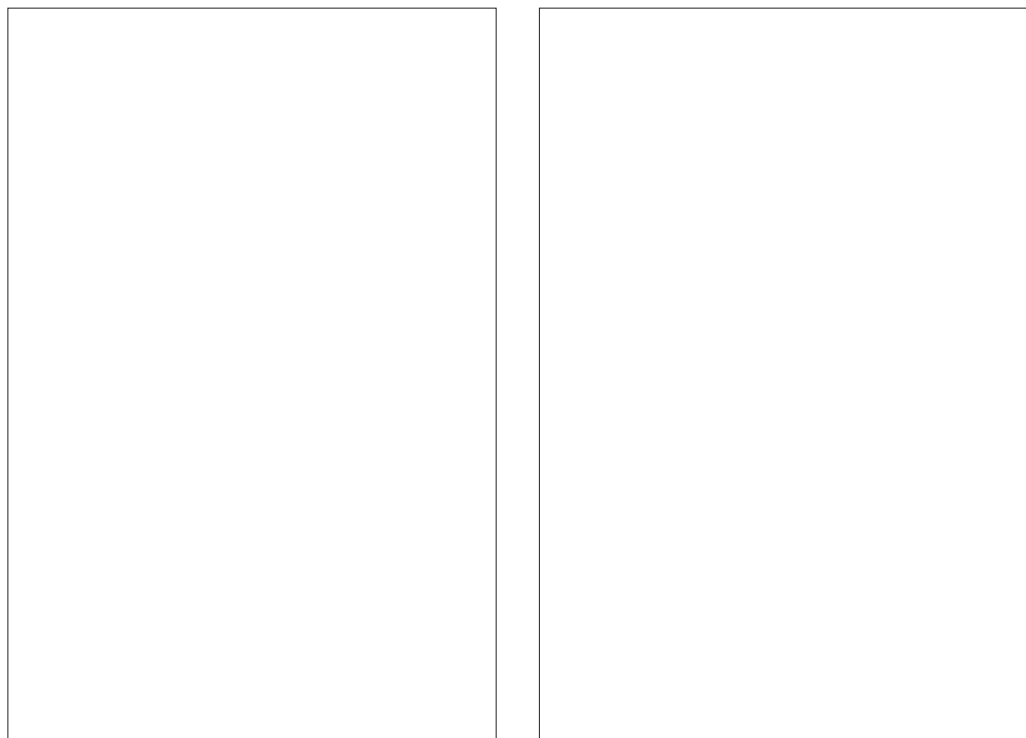


Fig. 6 Examples of photographs edited, tagged and published. Gipikids 10 and Gipikids 11

The images included on Figure 6 show the complexity of this activity. The photographs are tagged, but the creators were not able to write a title and a comment. They didn't receive any comments either after publication. Most young people have enough with sharing their achievements with their peers, who are the closest audience and part of the local community. Undoubtedly, that is also a good outcome for active and participatory work. In any case, it is necessary to deepen the search for strategies to facilitate awareness of an audience in global and online communities.

## 5 Conclusion

This article gives an example of what may happen in a non-formal educational environment when technology is introduced to promote literacy processes in children and youth. The results allow us to believe that what happens in these environments can inspire educational strategies that are present in the classroom too. Three conceptual dimensions have been the basis of this work, because they were the axes around which the objectives, the theoretical foundations and the results were organised:

1. The participants in the workshop have been present in local and Internet communities, and it's not easy to transition from one to the other. The need to share the goals and to look for instruments to achieve them became apparent from the beginning (Lave, 2011). The results show that it is not always easy to be aware that there are other people with whom you can interact beyond the screen. The conversations between adults and children were a point of support for young people to become aware of social interactions in virtual spaces and also helped to create a self-reflective community (Katz, 2008; Papacharissi, 2011).
2. We have looked at processes related to the acquisition of new literacy forms linked to the control of multimodal discourses from a double perspective. On the one hand, it is necessary to understand that messages are geared toward an audience; the use of specific hardware and software facilitated the creation of these messages (Katz, 2008). On the other, we must control the different dimensions of multimodal discourse in ways that allow us to generate and transmit meaningful messages. Working in small groups where young people had an active role contributed to generate awareness of the discourse dimensions that were used (Lacasa et al., 2016a).
3. We have explored support situations in learning and interactions between adults and children, and between peers (Rogoff, 2012). Adults organised and developed the experience, guiding and accompanying young people throughout the process. Certain activities, such as editing and tagging pictures, required special attention by the adults to make young people understand the media messages. In addition, the mutual support between children opened new paths and generated new shared interests, and young people even taught adults to become experts, for example in the use of applications such as PicsArts (Lacasa, 2013).

In conclusion, developing media literacies is a complex process. This work aims to show the support strategies, rooted on dialogue and conversations, contributing to media literacy development. Both the online and offline communities offer support when peers and adults are present. While this work is carried out in a non-formal educational context, these dialogue-supported strategies could be useful also in the classroom.

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