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25. Kongress der Deutschen Gesellschaft für
Erziehungswissenschaft (DGfE) at the University of Kassel: „Spaces
for Education. Spaces of Education“. Presentation (together with
Pernilla Granklint-Enochson & Marianne Björn)

On the Field of Tension of Media-Related *Visual Cultures* and the Demands of School – Empowering Teenage Pupils (in Sweden), and the *Seeing Glasses* as a Development of *Camera Ethnography*

Anja Kraus

Vor 15 Jahren hat Heike Schuppelius in ihrem Kunstprojekt “Mit den Augen des Anderen” eine Methode entwickelt, die geeignet ist, individuelle Blickverläufe annäherungsweise zu erheben. Die *Seeing Glasses* sind Brillen mit einer eingebauten digitalen, Kamera mit Video und Audio Funktion. ...

Die Bewegungen der Agierenden hinter der Kamera sind dann tatsächlich spontan und genuin, wenn sie die Kamera nach kurzer Zeit vergessen. In der Sozialforschung kann man mit den *Seeing Glasses* Daten ueber die Kontexte erheben, auf die sich Blicke richten, und die erwidernenden Blicke eruieren. Wir sprechend diesbeueglich von *visual cultures*.

Heute kann man Spionbrillen recht billig kaufen, Zudem gibt es viele vergleichbare billige Produkte, in die eine fast unsichtbare Kamera eingebaut ist. Die Nutzung der Technologien und ihre erzieherischen Implikationen haben sich allgemein in den letzten 15 Jahren stark verändert und stark ausgeweitet.

Wir nutzen diese kuenstlerische Arbeit als eine Pilot-Studie. Es wird zu ueberpruefen sein, ob Teenager ähnlich agieren wie die ProbandInnen. Wir wollen dabei auch ethische Ueberlegungen anstellen.

SONAT

how teaching and learning are constituted in Science Classrooms (since 2013), led by Anders Jakobsson (Malmö University)

DIGIT-M-ED

The project cooperates with “Global Perspectives on Learning and Development with Digital Video Editing Media” (DIGIT-M-ED, see: digitmed.wordpress.com), focusing on the

development of intercultural literacy in a global and interconnected world. Beside scientific synergy-effects, especially the school project is expected to profit from DIGIT-M-ED.

Data

In this project, the pupils of a 9th grade wear the *Seeing Glasses* during the school lessons in one week. The pupils also edit the film material in order to create films about 'our life in school'. A stationary camera and participating observations document the classroom context.

By the study one can expect new insights about the courses of attention of teenagers in school and their role for classroom education, focusing the formal and the informal, also media-related learning contexts, and the social interrelations of the pupils. Besides that, the innovative research instrument and method applied will be evaluated and thus made accessible to a wider use. The insights altogether serve as a basis for modelling *how* students can in a media-related way "be enabled to own their learning" (cp. Hattie 2008).

General Outlines

Digital media and adolescents is an emotive issue of pedagogy. However, there is a lack of empirical studies on the impacts of imaginaries of pupils respectively the way how they visualize being in a technology enhanced classroom. We investigate such impacts in terms of the effects of gazes, creating pedagogically desirable or undesirable relations, and the pedagogical responsibility connected to this.

The ideal of a childhood and youth free from the influences of digital media is still alive, though it is deeply thwarted by reality, as this age group is surrounded by media right from the birth and they extensively use it in many different ways. (Cf. <http://www.soi2014.se/>) As a rather short-circuited consequence the adolescents are widely regarded as "competent" users of, and even as pioneers in using digital media. (Cf. Carlsson 2010, Livingstone & Bovill 2001, et al.) This "competence" is extensively used in school by using PCs as a source of information and for ICT-enhanced learning (providing for wordbooks, encyclopedia, platforms, social networking and e-learning, learning games etc.). In terms of providing the schools with computers with basic software and internet access the Swedish communes take their lead e.g. from the campaign "en dator per elev" (evaluation see Fleischer 2013).

At the same time, the fast technological development of new digital means and applications leads to a successively reduced control of the contacts of the kids with digital media by those with pedagogical responsibility. So there is a rather fragile pedagogical frame of the indication of emancipative potentials of digital media. (Cf. Ofcom 2012) This is a problem as there is not only some evidence that the inventiveness and creativity of the use of digital media by young people is rather restricted (Livingstone 2009). We also meet a strong merchandised way of perceiving, interpreting and showing media applications in this field (Livingstone 2009). Furthermore, adolescents moreover easily expose a person, unmask him/her in different ways, or they make use of exhibitionist gestures. Then, they act as if they were journalists or film-actors without always reflecting the (also at times dangerous) impacts of doing this in front of a camera. The lack of inventiveness and creativity in the use of digital media, its merchandisation and the misuse of digital media cause ethical dilemma for a pedagogy that focuses a knowledge that promotes the development of social and cultural responsibility. Beside the formal, competent, routinized and creative use of digital media, there is thus also a certain amount of misuse or uncontrolled use of it. In our studies, media-related imaginaries in school will be explored in terms of social interaction and learning in the classroom and the pedagogical challenges connected to it.

Within her “camera-ethnographic” approach Mohn (2006) examines an entire claviature of possible interactional patterns, interdependencies and entanglements etc. of the gazes within video-graphical social research. By referring to this methodology and, at the same time, developing it further the research instrument *Seeing Glasses* will be evaluated.

Ethical Considerations

The project will be conducted according to the “Vetenskapsrådets forskningsetiska regler för samhällsvetenskaplig forskning”. Information, Friwilligkeit, anonymization.

In terms of letting the teenagers be partners in research within youth studies, the pedagogical aims of the project form an important part of the project. These pedagogical aims focus on empowering the youngsters to actively take part in revealing and handling their world (in accordance with the “Convention of the United Nations on the Rights of the Child”), with a special focus on enabling them to take the options and disadvantages of the digital world into account. They will be informed about precarious situations that may arise during the project and how they will be handled. We anticipate the following scenarios: - A pupil is teased for not wearing the camera glasses, for looking odd or for using them in a strange way (constantly

losing them etc.); - the camera glasses are used to tease a pupil by watching, and by this, filming him/her constantly or in unpleasant moments; - the camera glasses are used at forbidden places (toilets etc.) and outside school; - the pupils (secretly) copy and publish the film material. These scenarios will be developed together with the pupils in order to put up the following rules of handling the camera glasses and consequences of a breaking of the rules.

1. To follow up the rules of privacy (no mobbing, no publications of personal things etc.);
2. The camera-glasses belong to the project and are used only within the frame of it (restricted time).
3. Not to damage or misuse them.

The cooperation partner “kulturskola” developed a practically tested and well-improved concept on film and film editing (dramaturgy, storyboard, display details, camera angles, sound, light, technical details and software programs etc.) also in terms of its pedagogical challenges. The cooperation partner at the “kulturskola” is a specialist in teaching film. He is the cooperation partner also at the cooperating school.

Research Aims

The first aim of the research project is to approximate the views of the teenagers in the classroom. Of interest are the different fields of vision of each kid and how s/he moves and acts in her/his environment and reacts on events as well as his/her reflections on it. Hereby, we follow the underexposed claim of youth studies to give kids the possibility to express their perspectives on their situation in terms of gazes and their work on them reflecting on their individuality, social relations and everyday life. We will also work out the pedagogical responsibility that is connected to it.

The second aim is to empirically investigate the impacts of media-related “visual cultures” of youngsters on classroom education in terms of gazes that create pedagogically desirable relations, that is to say “narratives” and distinct learning activities, or such that are undesirable, that is negative effects of the “visual cultures” of youngsters on classroom education e.g. hints of harming or harassing people in a deliberate, repeated and hostile manner by a certain course of a gaze.

The third aim is to work out whether the *Seeing Glasses* fulfill the expectation to allow for approximating the views and practices of the individuals. Using the *Seeing Glasses* as an analytical tool of *Camera Ethnography* is supposed to make it possible to widen the methodology of this research approach.

Survey of the Field

Whereas there is an enormous and even booming volume of technologically determinist research on digital media- and technology-based learning, only recently a research on the inter-psychic as well as on the interpersonal processes of viewing, commending, sharing as well as designing and editing of digital media technologies has been initiated. (Cf. Livingstone 2009) Within this field the research on the “visual cultures” of young people, on the virtual communication among them, on creative activities and on forms of disruption such as “cyberbullying”, a topic mostly of Psychiatry and Psychology (cf. Hay et al. 2010, Ryo et al. 2014) and not Pedagogy, is situated. Recent research shows not least that the basic idea of a possibility to promote self-expression and social participation of adolescents by the use of digital media is not beyond critique: The practical-empirical reading of the idea of supporting the self-expression and social participation of adolescents with digital media undermines its credibility as these technologies obviously also entail risks on many levels (beside cyberbullying also hacking attacks, violent and hateful contents, divulcation of personal information online, economic exploitation, even sexual abuse etc., also poor concentration, inattentiveness etc.). In educational contexts there are challenges like that of adapting media didactics to new technical developments, instead of mere consummation developing agency, participation and competences (e.g. reading) via network computer systems, and the prevention of computer abuse. One should thus neither generalize the media usage behavior of adolescents at hand nor just uncritically stick to the wishful thinking connected to it. In educational regards, the question is, whether and how virtual media provide adolescents with possibilities to communicate their perspectives on their life-worlds and improve their learning, especially their ICT-enhanced learning at school, or might hinder it.

In this project their gazes will be investigated, the approach will be ethnographic.

Recently, there is a growing interest for the “gaze” in digital contexts (Vlieghe 2011, Friesen 2009). The real human “gaze” (cf. Sartre 2003, Lacan 1981, Foucault 1999) implies on the one hand, that the subject loses a degree of self-determination upon realizing that s/he is a visible object whereas s/he never appears within her/his own field of vision. The gaze is seen as a “blind spot” in the subject’s perception of visible reality, “disturbing its transparent visibility” (Žižek 1999, p.79). On the other hand, the objectifying gaze is a benefit for the subject in terms of desire. (Cf. Lacan 1981, Herbert 2010) The two contradictory poles create a field of tension that is experienced consciously as well as unconsciously as “visual events”.

“Visual events” can be unfolded educationally by employing meta-reflective strategies that challenge students’ preconceptions about “normal” ways of seeing (Buhl et al. 2004, 10).

The theoretical backdrop for the analyses of the gazes of youngsters in digital contexts is constituted by youth studies, the “visual culture”-approach and a prevalent “practice theory”.

Youth Research and Youth Studies – A Paradigm Shift and Pedagogical Challenges

Whereas until now a young person or pupil is still seen as a pertinent social identity in most of the theories and studies on pedagogy and classroom education (cf. Hackl 2008), already since the 1960s, the sociologically-oriented youth research or childhood studies (cf. Ariés 1960, de Mause 1974) accept that the idea of youth and childhood (Age: 0-18) is not fixed but subject to a dramatic change within the course of time; this idea is identified by the term “changed childhood”. Adolescence is then understood as a construct, and the prevalent objects of youth research are the causes as well as the issues of this construct.

At present successively also the fact is recognized that adolescents themselves interpret their situation (Rolff & Zimmermann 1997, p.151ff.). In methodological regards the research *on* this age group has been in parts replaced by a research *with* them (cf. Christensen & James 2008) examining their perceptions, perspectives and views of reality by taking the social and material circumstances of the interpretative activities of adolescents into account. Youth studies are thus based on the idea of paving the way for youngsters to express themselves. Consequently, its theoretical, methodological and methodical approaches promise to support the conceptualization of participative pedagogical approaches of any kind.

However, the methodological reading of the educational aim to empower youngsters to utter their points of views implies the assumption of an autonomous subject. Such a postulation meets with a harsh critique on the conception of a sovereign epistemic subject that has been questioned in Western philosophy for a long time, and has been completely deconstructed e.g. in poststructuralist theories. If there is no merely autonomous and sovereign acting of an adult, one thus wonders, how this should be possible for an under-aged person. There is moreover a pedagogical need to support them in uttering their perspectives, in our case their “visual cultures”.

There is no doubt that the use of the digital technologies alters the ways how pupils nowadays learn, socialize, consume and play in comparison to previous generations in general. These changes can be theoretically grasped as a transformation of the “visual cultures” of the young people over time.

The “Visual Culture”- Approach

The generalized concept of “visual cultures” (cf. Mirzoeff 1999, Rose 2012 et al.) describes the mediation of life through visualization as well as the growing swirl of imagery in contemporary societies. The latter is e.g. the case, when life increasingly takes place onscreen. Another striking feature of the concept of “visual culture” is the growing visualization of things that are not in themselves visual due to the growing technological capacity to make also such things visible that our eyes could not see unaided. “Visual cultures” are transmitted across national frontiers and contribute substantially to the globalization process. One of the outstanding consequences of the formidable rise of “visual cultures” is the phenomenon that today also human practices are more and more situated at the interface of visual technology and its events. However, a “visual culture” can neither be deciphered as actions, nor as distinct procedures or in terms of effects but as a pattern of acting, proceeding and affecting.

The modes of visibility and making something visible have always been significant for education and schools (cf. Buckingham 2003, Yelland 2006 et al.): For a long time the principle of an “education according to nature” grounded in the observations of “real things” by Comenius ([1657] 1967) ruled the didactical and the pedagogical thinking. Nowadays, this imagery is at least supplemented, if not replaced by the rise of virtual worlds. Digital information, communication and entertainment technologies create manifold learning opportunities in and outside the traditional borders of school. This kind of learning can be grasped e.g. in terms of a “multimodal” transformation as well as in terms of the acquirement of “multimodal” formats of knowledge. (Cf. Jewitt 2009) Heinz Moser (2006) points out the deep influence of the use of digital media on the schemes of everyday communication and aesthetics, especially that of young people, as well as general agency in life, communities and in society, he ciphers this out also in didactical regards. Presumably, the didactical and pedagogical impacts of this recent change are quite strong, on the other hand they are not yet conveyed. Therefore, there might be conflicts arising between the conventional means of education and the practices connected to them and the impacts of the “visual cultures” of teenagers. Examples for it are certain habits of seeing and expectations according to certain imaginaries, fantasies with a media-related content, also persistent inattentiveness, poor fine-motoric skills etc. Examples for the side of the institution are new forms of learning, but also conflicts with adult expectations, with curriculum and quality development etc.

It is difficult to understand that there is a lack of empirical studies on the impacts of media-related and virtual “visual cultures” of youngsters for pedagogy.

“Practice Theory”

Media-based “visual cultures” are displayed mostly in silent practices such as e.g. attentively watching a film, TV zapping, internet-surfing, cyber moving, video gaming and filming, making diverse use of mobiles, communicating online etc. In contrast to other skilled and competent, that is to say purposeful, even strategic actions the practices connected to the formulae and effects of digital media are to a high degree ambivalent. Thus, technical devices enable an actor to intentionally gain knowledge as well as to deal with it and even create diverse ludic spaces; at the same time unforeseen social interactions or side effects might emerge. The ambiguity of the gaze is thus also in a way true for the use of digital media.

The special character of media-related practices is reflected in the current “practice theory” (Schatzki 1996 and Schatzki et al. 2001, Reckwitz 2002) that mainly refers to the discussion on the network theory approach (cf. Latour 1996) as well as on the performativity paradigm (Wulf & Zirfas 2007). Generally, “practice theory” focuses on agency by explaining social phenomena neither only as results of human actions nor merely by means of structures or social wholes. Moreover, the human body is regarded as a nexus of manifold practical interrelations, entanglements and engagements with the world. Media and technology as well as creatures, things and environments are regarded as multimodal agencies deeply influencing the everyday-life of humans: We feel addressed by media, especially by films in terms of being exposed to a foreign gaze while not perceiving ourselves.

The *Seeing Glasses* as a Means of “Camera Ethnography”

In order to figure out the gaze of an individual and the course of his or her attention we make use of the idea of the artist Heike Schuppelius who in her project “Through the eyes of the other” (2001) invented a method for exploring the course of individual attentiveness. She built small cameras into ordinary spectacles and sent out four (nonetheless adult) performers equipped with such video-glasses on foot through an urban area. According to the artist, the acting persons forgot the filming camera already after a short time wearing the spectacles. Correspondingly, they must indeed have performed spontaneous and even genuine movements. The film-material then testifies an approximation of the view of the individual camera-person. This artwork serves us as a pilot-study. The hypothesis that teenagers react

alike is to be proved. Within social research the *Seeing Glasses* are thus supposed to make it possible to (with sound) record the individual gazes of the kids, their teachers and the researchers in the field. Also the examination of the ethical pedagogical impacts of the project will contribute to the evaluation of the research instrument.

In terms of its purpose to illuminate the theoretical, methodological and methodical implications of the *Seeing Glasses* as a research instrument for the area of youth studies the planned study refers to “Camera Ethnography”.

“Camera Ethnography”

Of all “qualitative” methods in Cultural and Social Sciences ethnography counts most radically on observations and conversations as well as on encounters and experiences as pertinent sources of a research approach. The ethnographer is supposed to be not only present and visible in the field, but also remaining so in the collected data and in the scientific results. In this research genre this insight replaces the clear division between data collection and interpretation. Neither the persons in the field nor the researcher can achieve a “thick description” (Geertz 1973) of his/her own without the other. Ethnographic description is linked to the investigating gazes, in the best case on both sides, which, in turn, are connected with what can be viewed in the field. Discovering/inventing and also designing such gaze-entanglements characterizes the creativity and attractiveness of the ethnographic process of knowledge accumulation.

“Camera Ethnography”, developed by Bina Elisabeth Mohn (2006), engaged and actively works on and with these interrelations. The method is supposed to enable the researching person to materially draft, design and reflect on the practices of focusing in filming and editing by intentionally using filming strategies. This methodology based on a permanent work on gazes offers a new dimension of video-analytical work to Social Sciences. “Camera Ethnography” makes use of focused audiovisual presentations in order to make social phenomena sensorial visible and to work out the importance of professionally pointing the camera on something for scientific research.

To merely adopt this methodology and method to the *Seeing Glasses* is not possible, because of one, but anyway striking difference between the two forms of data collection. “Camera Ethnography” bases on the active, deliberate as well as highly controlled endeavors of the filming person to position him-/herself in a room with the aim to make it possible to successfully contact the research subjects in the field, e.g. in terms of a direct exchange of

gazes. In contrast, the use of the *Seeing Glasses* is supposed to be spontaneous, unprepared and authentic (in terms of not professional). The means, the *Seeing Glasses*, is supposed to vanish.

We will refer to the camera-ethnographic claviature by taking the social interactional patterns, interdependencies and gaze entanglements, investigated, systematized and shown by the approach of “Camera Ethnography”, as a basis for complementing them by unconscious, compulsory and by other tacit forms of associations, correlations and alliances. (Cf. Kraus et al. 2014).

Work with the Data

The research design of our study involves the school project ‘Re-inventing everyday life by using *Seeing Glasses*’, as a whole filmed by a stationary camera. In order to analyze the raw film material a map will be created showing the paths and focusses of the acting persons by means of the recorded images, activities and interactions. Other data is the material produced by the *Seeing Glasses* as an innovative way of digitally supported data collection in terms of getting the perspectives of acting youngsters into sight. The “visual cultures” of the pupils get a further digital dimension by being edited by them as a film about “our life in school”; their commenting of the film sequences and their film production will be documented by participating observation. The choice of data and the analyses will stick to the distinct research questions of each of the applicants.

Seen against the backdrop of practice research and youth studies the special challenge is to develop a methodology and method for the data-based examination of the motives, sense-making processes, interpersonal interactions and practices of youngsters in using digital media. I will analyze the different collected data in terms of their quality of information in this regard. According to practice theory many different agencies make narratives, learning and disruption happen. These will be worked out by analyzing the films produced by the students, the classroom situation as well as their verbalizations.

Supposedly, the gazes form intersubjective “visual cultures” in which social in- and exclusion and social conflicts play a role. The theoretical interpretations of the (real) gaze and its inconsistencies serve as the theoretical backdrop for the qualitative empirical analysis of the course and the interchange of the gazes of the acting persons in the field, grasped by the “Seeing Glasses”. Pernilla Granklint-Enochson will investigate the “visual cultures” of adolescents reflected by “tacit” student-to-student-interaction.

The gazes also convey potentials for narratives and learning, especially reading activities, investigated by Marianne Björn in terms of the learning contents, the individual's incentives and their ways of interacting with their environment.

Relevance for the Educational Sciences

The relevance of the project for the Educational Sciences can be resumed in six arguments:
Internationally

Firstly, the project deals with the central methodological and methodical question of how to get the perspectives of the juvenile acting persons in school into sight. Secondly, the project is of relevance in terms of figuring out didactical settings and aspects of the school culture in terms of interaction, conflict-management and education. Thirdly, the project allows for insights into informal learning contexts out of school, respectively such that are formed by the use of new media. In this regard, social class, ethnicity, age, gender may turn out as important analytical categories. Fourthly, the project brings together two areas of scientific research, which are hardly both addressed in another empirical study: the medially framed visual cultures of youngsters and the imaginary of school. This interdisciplinary perspective implicates the potentials to draw innovative, especially didactical consequences from the results of the study and, by doing this, to make proposals for a further development of classroom education.

Nationally

Fifthly, the project will form a part of the teacher education and other study programs at the Linnæus University Växjö/Kalmar, serving its quality development as well as strengthening the interdisciplinary cooperation. Sixthly, an international relevance of the project is given by the fact that it is part of scientific networks on the European level, such as e.g. that on “Tacit Dimensions of Pedagogy”, DIGIT-M-ED and SONAT in Sweden.