Esthetics as a Tacit Dimension of Media Education

Beside the kind of research in pedagogy which is founded in governmental theories, cognitive sciences and psychometrics, there is another strong movement in pedagogy that models processes of Bildung and education by referring to anthropological, cultural and esthetical theories (cp. Mollenhauer & Wulf 1996, Liebau 1992, Zirfas 2007, Kraus 2008, Steinnes 2012; „Rat für kulturelle Bildung“ 2012 et al.). In these approaches it is recognized that not only well-articulated and -intended, but also non-discursive communication and interaction play a major role in the processes of learning and Bildung. Instead of focusing only on well-directed pedagogical impulses, the heterogeneous contextual influences on human behaviour as well as corporal, spatial and material aspects of learning settings etc. get in sight.

It came out that in order to figure such aspects out, there is a special need to reflect on practices and to find inventive ways for an empirical exploration of them (Wulf 2004, Althans et al. 2007, Nentwig-Gesemann 2001, Herbert 2011, Bergstedt 2012, Kraus 2012; network “Tacit Dimensions in Pedagogy” et al.). In these contexts, creativity and innovation is rather attributed to practices than to (new) schedules, models, plans, techniques etc.

The two main directions in general pedagogy also characterize the research in the field of media education. On one hand, there is a broad research working with cognitivistic models. On the other hand, there is a more principal research on the various impacts of diverse environmental factors on social life and on the individuals, and new media is regarded as only one of these.

Then, in terms of media literacy (on a first glance) also unfamiliar phenomena and concepts may get in sight. This is e.g. the case, when the bodily origin of experiences and insights is emphasized, by taking over e.g. a phenomenological perspective (Meyer-Drawe 1996, Herczeg & Winkler 2004, Friesen 2009 et al.). According to the phenomenological approach “learning retreats into darkness” (Meyer-Drawe 2008). Anyway, learning, also learning with new media is figured out here as a responsive process between world and self, as embodiment, mimesis, multimodal transformation, displacement etc.

In our symposium we will work out some of the implications of the interpretation of media in educational settings, which take the impacts of its heterogeneous contexts into account. By doing this we will then also ask how our insights can be retransferred into Educational Sciences in general.

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2. Media, Simulacra and the Gaze in Pedagogy
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Due to the extensive reliance on media in our everyday perception of the surroundings we see a shift in relation to aesthetics from an individual focus to social negotiations around a situation. This article presents how individuals shape aesthetic systems through the use of networked media, resulting in self-producing systems that make themselves available for recognition, as well internally as externally. These cultures unfold in formats that educational institutions are not geared to meet.

The article demonstrates and builds its arguments, both, theoretically and through an explorative study: Theoretically we draw from visual culture (Buhl, 2012; Bourriaud, 2002; Mitchell, 2002), learning (Dohn, 2002) and digital media studies (Ejsing-Duun, 2011). The explorative case study is focused on the use of the mobile application Draw Something (Buhl and Ejsing-Duun, 2013), along with other current apps. In a case study we take them as examples of how technology facilitates our meeting with the world through the senses and how we decode and negotiate social aesthetic expressions.

The intent of the article is to suggest and discuss an aesthetic approach in which the process of decoding and negotiations around practices in social media is significant.
2. Media, Simulacra and the Gaze in Pedagogy

Anna Herbert

The accumulation of knowledge is seen to facilitate personal development. Masschelein & Koller (2003) argue that production of knowledge is a kind of ‘hard currency’. Through ranking and self-ranking a student becomes the object of his/her own judgement. At first the parents help the child to rank behaviors, then school is more or less working as Foucault’s panopticon, producing a desirable self-regulation. The gaze is central to this mastery (Lacan 2007). In the process of ranking a certain kind of ethics emerge as doing-well may become confused with the being-good and visa versa. Mastery means savior-faire, a knowledge which belongs to the body (Lacan1969-1970). If ‘what is produced’ (knowledge) is not considered to be ‘good enough’, one may attempt to look like fulfilling the expectations as if one has the knowledge. Being ‘seen’ is important here, specially being seen to be successful.

Baudrillard (1994) points to the importance of building image in postmodern society: Making oneself seen is to put oneself into the circuit of desire, desire initiated by the gaze of the Other. New technologies such as cameras, computers and i-pads promote the "gaze" enabling students to ‘see’ and to be seen, marketing their own product ‘self’ as excellent.
'From Body to Body’ – The Interactional Acquisition of Rhythmic Patterns

Maud Hietzge

To acquire rhythmic patterns is fundamental to human existence (cp. Knoblauch, Hirschauer) - in esthetic regards as well as for cognitive and social competences. This kind of bodily learning is based upon elementary experiences like the heartbeat, breathing, falling asleep etc. (Simms 2008). In Music and in Sport Science rhythm counts for one of the most important cultural structures (Franke 2010, 2008; Röthig 1990), unconsciously linking the biological basis to cultural conventions. Rhythms structure movements and reveal sensual understandings of different life atmospheres. Not at last the rhythms of (new) media strongly influence what is taken for granted on a bodily basis, i.e. acceleration, flexibility, thrill (see Hietzge 2013).

1. The “Researching School” – Exploring Tacit Dimensions of Pedagogy by Virtualisations

Anja Kraus


The central component of the project is an online-platform providing information about the academic procedures and the instruments of qualitative, dialogically structured evaluation. These are linked with further services, e.g. consulting etc. The documentation of development projects that are carried out by academically supported agencies.

In my presentation I unfold some aspects of the role of tacit dimensions of pedagogy in the project “Researching School”, and I show how these aspects can be explored.