The Early Years Technological Landscape: Reflecting on Digital Childhoods for Pedagogic Planning

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Digital Technologies and Learning in the Early Years

• Part 1: The Early Years Technological Landscape
  • Chapter 1: Framing Technological Experiences in the Early Years
    • Lorna Arnott
  • Chapter 2: Children’s Technological Learning Journeys
    • Eleni Karagiannidou
  • Chapter 3: Re-imagining Play with New Technologies
    • Nicola Yelland and Caja Gilbert
This paper: applicability of conceptual frameworks in practice

• Our Research Questions

How do we conceptualise contemporary digital childhoods; beyond the suggestion that children increasingly have access to, and engage with, a broad range of new technologies? How can we draw on these experiences to characterise multimodal learning?

How are children’s learning identities emerging and growing in an era where children have to negotiate both embodied and digital identities?

How can we draw on our theoretical understandings of digital childhoods to frame children’s pedagogical and ecological early childhood experiences in the digital age?
our framework

pieces of the jigsaw come together to inform the pedagogic planning for digital childhoods

recognising digital contexts

cultural and social digital capital

defining digital childhoods

plurality: embodied and digital

digital learning ecologies

changes to the way children play and learn

connectivity as lived experience

empowerment of children?

multi-modality
Definitions of digital resources are fruitless

- The evolution of technologies is too fast paced for definitions to be meaningful

Instead focus on the ‘childhood’

- The shift in the way children experience the world;
- How children interact with physical, social and cultural spaces in contemporary society
- How learning and play is transformed within this dynamic and fluid context

Should we focus on digital?

- Another period in childhood history: Enlightenment to Digital...
empowerment of children?

Fig I: narratives of childhood and youth and implied values

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth at risk</th>
<th>Youth as capable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerability</td>
<td>Liberation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consumers through adults</td>
<td>Producers and consumers</td>
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<td>Young people as passive</td>
<td>Young people as active</td>
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<td>Young people as novices</td>
<td>Young people as capable</td>
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<td>Play as ‘private’</td>
<td>Play as ‘public’</td>
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<th>PROTECT</th>
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<td>Continue</td>
<td>Develop</td>
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<td>Hierarchy</td>
<td>Co-participative</td>
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<td>Closed</td>
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<td>Fearful</td>
<td>Brave</td>
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<td>Absolute/Fixed</td>
<td>Fluid/Counter</td>
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Taken from Craft 2012
“New technologies affect the physical, social, emotional, psychological, educational and learning ‘environments’ that surround children. In many cases, children are immersed in experiences with digital technologies before their formal schooling years, and they come to school equipped with an already developing range of skills and experiences (Craft, 2012). Therefore, one of the main reasons for this undertaking relates to the growing need for understanding the complexities of children’s formal and informal learning experiences”.
Multi-modality
Children live in the world of tangible technologies but they also live in an abstract world of symbolic representations:

- They negotiate an embodied identity but also a digital identity
- At times their digital identity is moulded by parents on their behalf.
• Technologies not as tools but as resources or artifacts
• Social, cultural, economic & political implications
• Fluent in access and use
• Multimodal lives: making meaning and connections
Changes to the way children play and learn

Photo - source: https://www.flickr.com/photos/ticoneva/5581238453/
Connectivity as lived experience

Childhood is digital from birth: it is lived and experienced in everyday life, how do we mirror this in early childhood pedagogy?

Contactless technology

Smartphone Photography

Smartphone Photography

Rebecca
17 months old

(Videos in original presentation, but stills presented here)
Everyday Literacy

Heather 3.5 years

Early Computing Knowledge

Everyday numeracy
Linking to Pedagogic Planning

“High quality experiences with technologies do not happen by chance. Technologies do not do the pedagogic planning for us, despite their interactive properties.” (Arnott 2017).
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Thank you! Questions?