Collaborative Creativity is Shaped by Different Semiotic Resources

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Abstract

Facilitating collaborative creativity among children involves offering material resources that support collaborative and creative interactions. Popular views of tablets, such as the iPad, suggest that they are better suited to solitary game-playing or video-watching than to collaborative open-ended tasks. I explore this further through a social semiotic lens, applying the concepts of ‘semiotic resources’ and ‘affordances’ to develop a more nuanced understanding of what tablets have to offer in relation to children’s collaborative creativity. Through this lens, I compare observations of six pairs of 5-6-year-old children engaged in a collaborative drawing task completed either on paper or on the iPad. I apply a thematic analysis to the children’s dialogue across 25 episodes (15 iPad, 10 paper) and the visual dimensions of their 41 drawings (23 iPad, 18 paper), and develop three interwoven themes: 1) attitudes to space, 2) momentum of the line and 3) pathways to representation. For each of these themes, I explore how the affordances of the iPad and/or the particular application feed into these aspects of the drawing process and the implications of this for children’s collaborative creativity. The analysis suggests that drawing on the iPad can be more responsive and less subject to personal planning than drawing on paper. I suggest that this difference is shaped by physical properties such as the touch-screen interface, but also emerges as a result of the cultural investment in drawing on paper as a form of ‘self-expression’, a notion that works to limit exploratory and collaborative engagement with the resources. Since participants were noticeably open to exploring new ideas together while drawing on the iPad, I argue that we need to reassess the potentials of touch-screen tablets to support tasks of collaborative creativity in educational contexts.
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Joining in on the creative chaos with our students, we logged our own curiosities and passions. As I scribbled poems, sketched the plant on my desk, and recorded questions about who invented the fountain pen, I was re-immersed in the joy of the learning process. I'm convinced the notebook made me a more engaged teacher, especially on challenging days. There's no way to know with certainty what the effects of these notebooks were. Explicitly discuss creativity myths and stereotypes with your students. Help them understand what creativity is and is not, and how to recognize it in the world around them. Experiment with activities where students can practice creative thinking. Many teachers have suggestions for creative activities they've tried as warm-ups or quick breaks.

Touch creates conflicts. Paper 14 - Collaborative learning through film production on iPad: Family digital literacy practices are the object of study of a considerable number of investigations. The childhoods of today's children are shaped by the influence of changes related to system transformations and globalization. They grow up in a global civilization, they witness ongoing changes, suffer from the effects of domestic changes and experience various events (Małyska, 2011). This study examines how the properties of digital (an iPad app and PC software) and non-digital (collage and drawing) resources for children's text-making influence the creative expression of a three-year-old during collaborative text-making with her father at home. Particular attention was paid to the child's ‘possibility thinking’ (Craft, 2008) and engagement in ‘what if scenarios', her father's support for this kind of creative expression and their joint creative collaboration as it unfolded during eight episodes of text-making. We used video transcripts analysed using themat.