

Rethinking Educational Ethnography  
Researching On-line Communities and Interactions  
The Fourth Annual Conference  
University of Copenhagen  
Copenhagen, 3-4 June, 2014



Photo: Heine Pedersen

## ABSTRACTS PAPER

The fourth edition of *Rethinking Educational Ethnography: Researching On-line Communities and Interactions* is organized by the Department of Media, Cognition and Communication, the Section of Education, University of Copenhagen and the network at VIA University College, Faculty of Health Sciences, in collaboration with ECER Network 19.

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More information is available at: <http://pur.mef.ku.dk/itaka/konferencer/ree/>

The deadline for full papers, though still preliminary, is the 25<sup>th</sup> of May  
Papers are to be sent to karenb@hum.ku.dk

This conference forms part of a long-term discussion that began in Helsinki at ECER 2010, where participating researchers discussed emerging concerns about virtual ethnography and discovered a shared interest. In 2011 this debate gave rise to the first annual *Rethinking Educational Ethnography: Researching On-line Communities and Interactions* conference held at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, at the University of Porto and organized by the Educational Research Centre (CIIE) - and to a second gathering within the ECER Network 19 in Berlin. In 2012, the second annual conference was organized by the Centre for the Study of Change in Culture and Education (CECACE) and the Department of Educational Management, and held at the University of Barcelona. This facilitated contact between participants, which encouraged debate regarding emergent practices in the field of online educational ethnography. The third conference was organized by the Institute of Research on Population and Social Policies of the National Research Council of Italy (IRPPS-CNR) and the network of Sociology of Education, of the Italian Association of Sociology (AIS-EDU), at the University of Napoli 'Federico II'.

The fourth conference, while building on knowledge generated in the previous meetings, will invite ethnographers in different fields of research within education and learning, to discuss the challenges of researching within the context of IT-based learning. This will include the consideration of strategies for organizational and pedagogical development, online learning and new patterns in communication and interactions, by promoting opportunities and exchanges at the epistemological, methodological and theoretical level.

In particular, the fourth conference proposes to reflect upon multi-sited research design in ethnography; covering and coping with changing learning contexts and shifting online-offline settings. In many respects, the shift between online-offline settings and the new tendencies to blend learning strategies are a challenge, leading to the complex restructuring of the inner world of the classroom, teaching and learning. Concomitantly, there is a discernible increase in the interest for online learning as a part of educational and organizational development, combined with interest for the research based evaluation of this online learning in practice. This provides important possibilities for the consideration of the involvement of the subjects of educational and social research within ethnographic evaluation and investigation; as active co-producers of data, empirical overviews and detailed analysis. These involvements in the phases of collecting, analyzing, and writing ethnography permit genuine opportunities for extensive networking during the investigation. The involvement in research based evaluation and the processes of networking raise basic questions to ethnographers: How to explore the learning context and the shift between online and off-line settings in the fields of practice? How to observe and collect data about formal and non-formal, profession oriented learning? How to

analyze the learning space and processes? What is the status of the ethnographical in-depth knowledge?

The fourth conference invites paper proposals that may explore the development and consolidation of these questions, and reflect upon the production of new knowledge and understanding of the IT-based learning context and its practical processes. The discussion on these issues may contribute to enhancing the design of qualitative and empirical learning research in digital ethnography, and also to understanding the current strategies for organizational and pedagogical development - to promote active participation in the ethnographic investigation of educational innovation and its dynamics.

This conference encourages both scholars and PhD students to submit their research and welcomes submissions that discuss completed studies, field work, or works in progress. We specifically invite paper proposals, which address one or several of the following issues:

- Multi-sited exploration of the learning context, and the challenges and possibilities of perceiving research participants as co-producers of educational ethnographies
- Multi-level case studies and investigations of IT-based strategies for organizational and pedagogical development
- Online learning and new patterns in communication and interaction
- Research based evaluation of digitally innovative education and online learning in practice
- The process of networking, promoting opportunities and exchanges at the epistemological, methodological and theoretical level.

## **Making sense of Facebook: A mixed methods approach to analysing online student groups**

*By Janus Aaen*

*Keywords: online groups, informal learning, mixed methods, online learning*

The objective of the paper is to discuss a methodological design developed to analyse self-governed student Facebook groups as a part of a larger study of the use of ICT in Danish secondary schools (Mathiasen et al. forthcoming). Addressing the theme *on-line learning and new patterns in communication and interactions*, the paper will discuss how this methodological setup can help the researcher gain in-depth knowledge of the students' use of facebook groups, looking past the traditional dichotomy between virtual and real as well as the distinction between school-related and non-school-related communication. The paper will discuss the potential shortcomings of the design as well as how the approach can be further developed.

Beneito-Montagut (2011) argues that ethnographic research of online phenomena often has a tendency to overlook the significance of the offline activities of the subjects. Thus, abandoning the notion of a purely virtual ethnography (Hine 2001), Beneito-Montagut urges researchers to strive for a more "...holistic analysis of the way in which social information and communication technologies operate within society in everyday life" (Beneito-Montagut 2011 p. 716).

Based on this notion, the methodological setup presented in the paper is based on a mixed methods approach (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2010) and consists of both qualitative and quantitative studies in both online and offline settings. The study of the Facebook groups set off with a content analysis (Holsti 1969) of 2247 posts and 12217 comments spread across six student Facebook groups. This study was flanked by 1) statistical data on the students activities in the groups 2) a comprehensive questionnaire concerning the general use of ICT (including Facebook) by students and teachers in the Danish secondary school, 3) qualitative focus group interviews (Halkier 2006) with both teachers and students concerning their general use of ICT (including Facebook) and 4) follow-up in-depth telephone interviews with the teachers, comparing the activities of the students in the Facebook groups with the teacher's assessment of the individual student's academic skills, participation level and social status in class.

This methodological triangulation has resulted in a comprehensive body of data which can be approached from many theoretical angles and can potentially inform a variety of different issues, e.g. the role of self-governed Facebook groups in formal settings, social inclusion and

visibility between students, or the learning potentials of mediated group communication.

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## **Exploring the effects of the learning context: Comparing and contrasting on- and off-line qualifications providing programmes and courses for upper-secondary level and higher education matriculation**

*Dennis Beach, School of Education and Special Education, University of Gothenburg, Anna-Carin Jonsson and Catarina Player-Koro (Gothenburg, Borås, Sweeden)*

This submission aims to contribute an example of research (conditional on funding) where key challenges of researching on-line learning and its effects may become articulated at epistemological, methodological and theoretical levels. The project has a multi-sited design that includes combined ethnographic research forms. It targets and compares learning, interaction and outcomes in relation to both online and offline settings and responds to the increase of interest in on-line learning, often heralded as a saviour pedagogical form, and the strong need for comprehensive and sustained research based evaluation of on-line learning activities and their outcomes in practice. How to observe and collect data about formal/non-formal learning profession oriented learning and how to make best use of that data are among the issues we aim to explore. We will discuss:

- How to do comparative, ethnographically enriched multi-sited explorations of on- and off-line learning and learning contexts and their affordances and what can be learned from this
- The challenges of doing research based evaluation of digitally innovative online learning

The planned investigation is a comparative study of upper secondary school qualifications courses in two kinds of learning context: conventional off-line upper-secondary school programmes and new 'digital gymnasia' (IT-platform schools) offering distance education primarily through digital interaction interfaces and digital platform technologies. Some students choose to study at these types of school but many students today have these types of school as their only realistic option for obtaining necessary upper-secondary school qualifications. This applies particularly to students who have previously failed to matriculate from upper-secondary school. We will examine who chooses these school forms compared to 'conventional schools' and what the key characteristics of the catchment and motivations are. We will also ask and ethnographically and statistically explore and describe what it means for them when learning based on new digital platforms replace traditional forms of formal schooling. Using Bernstein we will start our comparisons with a comparison of evaluation practices and discourses. We will compare assessment contents, practices, technologies, discourses and policies and the conversations about evaluation and assessment that take place in the pedagogical

recontextualisation arenas associated with the two types of context. Further comparisons will be made after this. Data productions will involve on- and off-line ethnography, interviews, discourse analysis and interviewing. Mathematics B, English B, Swedish as a second language (SFI) are currently envisaged to be the courses focused on. (390 words)

*Keywords*

On-line off-line learning; Upper-secondary school programmes and courses; Bernsteinian analysis; Mixed methods; Multi-modal and multi-sited ethnography

## **Coming Back to Basic Concepts of Context**

*Karen Borgnakke (Copenhagen Denmark)*

Using ethnographic approaches to explore innovative learning contexts and to contextualize ideas, norms and values for organizational development places the basic concept of context at the center of reflections on research. The further shifting of contexts and even shifts between online and off-line contexts are a challenge for ethnographic analysis and methodology (Borgnakke 2013b).

Based on ethnographic fieldwork; the research project analyzes the scholastic, profession oriented and academic learning context. Conceptualized as contexts, these three areas are the place and space for ongoing fieldwork and for case studies carried out in upper secondary schools, nursing education and education at universities. The main focus for the ethnographic studies is concentrated on educational innovation and strategies for organizational and pedagogical development (Borgnakke 2010b).

Following the ethnographic principle of “following the field of practice,” the concepts of ‘field and space’ in digital conditions need to be renewed, while remaining related to the classic ethnographic approach. (Marcus 1995; Borgnakke 2010a) In accordance with the interpretation of ethnography in online communities; (Leander and McKim 2002, Hammersley 2006, Borgnakke 2013a) we can stress the need to re-think, and move beyond, site-based ethnography - though we still need the fieldwork to be grounded and situated. In research terms, then, ‘following the field,’ means following courses across online and offline spaces - tracing the flow of objects, texts and the embedded multiple contexts.

On this background the paper will rediscover the ethnographic meaning of the flow of objects, texts and multiple contexts. The paper will clarify the relation to sociological analysis and concepts of field, (Bourdieu) discourse (Foucault) and paradigm (Kuhn) and clarify relations to basic models analyzing ‘text-in-context’ and communicative interactions. (Habermas)

In accordance with previous and contemporary empirical findings, (Borgnakke 1996, 2012) the paper will exemplify the ethnographic meaning of strong context signifiers related to the discourse, and the interactive and communicative patterns in different face-to-face, and online learning contexts.

The paper will clarify the basic concept of context, where this perspective aims to sharpen the empirical analytical strategy for achieving both an overview and the detailed analysis of the learning context, discourse and innovative strategies.

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## Considering the methodological issues related to studying DIY learning in virtual and blended learning environments

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KEY WORDS: educational ethnography, autonomous learning, assessment, self-regulated learning

### ABSTRACT

This year our research group has begun a three-year project titled *Do-it-yourself in Education: expanding digital competence to foster student agency and collaborative learning* (543177-LLP-1-2013-1-ES-KA3-KA3MP), which aims to support and cultivate an ethos of “DIY learning” in schools. We are motivated by our belief that students and educational institutions need to foster learning experiences that support learners' critical capacity. This is not a goal that can be achieved by using only one platform or tool. Instead, true digital competence means using available devices with pedagogical approaches such as "flipped learning" (Bergmann & Sans, 2012) or transdisciplinary inquiry-based projects, which guide young people to grow into active and thoughtful learners.

For our communication we are interested in posing the question: how will we document and research so-called “DIY learning” within the proposed DIY Lab throughout the lifespan of this project? The project design is built on a collaborative action research approach (Reason and Bradbury, 2001) that allows for an ongoing dialogical process of analysis and practice. Therefore, prior to implementing the DIY Lab concept in three primary and three secondary schools as well as two universities in Spain, Finland and the Czech Republic, this spring we will carry out the first phase of this project, which entails working with focus groups of teachers, students and parents in order to developing an understanding of what practices that support autonomous learning are already in place, in each participating educational context.

However, once we have collected this data our research team will need to develop guidelines for teachers and school administrators regarding what DIY learning is and how it can be fostered in educational centres. To this end, in parallel with our focus groups, we will review ethnographies that blend virtual and physical spaces that focus on DIY learning in formal, informal and non-formal educational contexts (for example: Guzzetti, Elliott, & Welsch, 2010; Lankshear & Knobel, 2010; Ito et al, 2010; Guzzetti, 2009; Rosner & Bean, 2009; Torrey, McDonald, Schilit & Bly, 2007; Kearney & Schuck, 2006). From this review we will discuss and problematize the methodological issues that arise when studying this type of learning practice and introduce a working-definition of DIY learning that we hope to guide our work as the project

develops. We will also share our proposal for documenting and assessing DIY learning in the upcoming stages of the project.

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## Experienced and observed value creation in communities of learning practice: Looking at the same scene from within and outside the box

Filitsa Dingyloudi and Jan-Willem Strijbos (Munich, Germany)

A situated approach to learning views learning as part of the experienced, lived-in world and is shaped by and shapes identities that learners build through their participation in socially situated practices (Lave, 1991; Barab & Duffy, 2012). Within a situated learning framework, the idea of promoting and assessing value creation within a community, has been initially addressed by Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002), and further developed by Wenger, Trayner and DeLaat (2011). Wenger et al. (2011) conceptualise value creation as “the value of learning enabled by community involvement and networking” (p. 7). More specifically, the setting within which values are created is that of communities or networks that serve as social structures for social learning activities (e.g., sharing ideas, co-constructing knowledge, exchanging experiences, shared development in the domain of community interest). Wenger et al. (2011) distinguish five cycles of value, which do not necessarily need to be all covered or follow a linear sequence: (a) *Immediate Value*, (indicated by productive activities), (b) *Potential Value* (indicated by robust resources), (c) *Applied Value* (indicated by promising practices), (d) *Realised Value* (indicated by return on investment), and (e) *Transformation Value* (indicated by developing a new framework). The present study examines the experienced values attributed by members of three learning communities. Wenger et al.’s (2011) framework for value creation, will be applied to divulge experienced values by community members, as well as identify the observed values based on community members’ actual participation, and further explore any similarities or differences between them. The participants were 45 international students who were members of three different learning communities in parallel to a Learning Sciences master’s program (Community 1, N = 13; Community 2, N = 10; Community 3, N = 22). The participants gathered as plain peers to address common needs with respect to their academic skills through voluntary participation in community events, namely informal face-to-face community meetings. The sharing mechanism was peer feedback on work in-progress under the guidance of a participatory facilitator. Each community’s lifespan was one semester. A mixed-methods approach is employed to capture the phenomenon of value creation from different angles, with both qualitative and quantitative data to be analyzed. A content analysis of video recordings of 17 community events (Community 1: 6 meetings, Community 2: 4 meetings, Community 3: 7 meetings) will be conducted to identify the observed values, along with a content analysis of members’ personal narratives to divulge the experienced values.

[http://www.psy.lmu.de/ffp\\_en/persons/ag-strijbos/dingyloudi-filitsa/index.html](http://www.psy.lmu.de/ffp_en/persons/ag-strijbos/dingyloudi-filitsa/index.html)

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## **Political Places & Legal Limits: Women and Online Education in Saudi Arabia**

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The Internet is an ever-evolving platform for self-expression and a locus of social and political life. It is also a site for teaching and learning. Since 2009, Anna Piela has conducted research on academic and mainstream media's coverage of Muslim women's online activity and activism. Her studies have addressed a multiplicity of issues including self-representation. Drawing upon Piela's work in this area, this paper positions online activity as a central feature of contemporary educational evolution in Saudi Arabia. Ethnographic research conducted between 2010 and 2014 with a group of female university students in Saudi Arabia is presented herein with the aim of showing how women's online narratives of struggle and emancipation are forms of self-representation as well as local knowledge production with significant political power in both local and global contexts.

Courses in politics and law are not offered at their university; however, students are using social media sites and microblogs, such as Facebook and Twitter, to educate themselves and each other about social issues and political and legal processes. Students' creativity and autodidacticism combine to produce authentic educational experiences or "curricula of desire" that aim to fill the gaps in the classroom and on campus. Online education is increasingly characterized by peer-to-peer teaching and learning practices and peer generated knowledge production. This contribution discusses and critically analyzes data collected from a group of participants between the ages of 18-25 whose lives online not only extend traditional classroom teaching and learning practices, but also reposition the role of university education in the region and recast educated women in Saudi Arabia's public sphere as citizen journalists, business women, politicians, and lawmakers. Skillfully transitioning between online and offline contexts of their everyday lives without missing beat, students collectively imagine and craft discussions and debates about social issues and develop policy protocols for social change. Though these experiences take place outside the classroom and off campus, they are essential components of students' education as community members and global citizens. Methodologically, this paper offers a compelling case study of a long-term, multi-sited, mixed methods research project and suggests that ethnographers in the digital age benefit substantially from a combination of online and offline data collection.

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## **The roles of the virtual on two ethnographic research projects**

*Fernando Hernández-Hernández, Juana María Sancho Gil (Barcelona Spain)*

In the last Rethinking Ethnography Conference in Napoli, when Attila Bruni, from the University of Trento, gave his lecture about the relationships among Humans, Texts, and Machines in medicine practices, one of us raised a rhetorical question: Now a days it possible to develop ethnographical studies without taking into account the social life taking place in virtual environments?

Since we assume that virtual environments are indispensable to study contemporary life, we will explore in this paper their roles to understand the social lives of two groups in two ethnographic studies. The first study explores how novice teachers are transiting in the teaching profession and build their professional identity between their initial professional development and the firsts working years. The second searches how young people make sense of their learning experiences inside and outside secondary schools.

### **Being teacher in connection to virtual environments**

If now-a-days teachers try to understand who the children are and how they learn (or not) at schools they should be aware of their students experiences in the virtual environments. Moreover, their own professional views, knowledge and competences are not only shape in formal professional development activities, but in their whole experience as human beings; and a good deal of these experiences is taking place in cyberspace. Therefore, being a teacher today requires being connected and knowledgeable to the virtual world. Not only for knowing children's imaginary, but to access relevant information for teaching, be linked to other teachers, participate on network learning spaces. Some of these issues have been explored in the research "The construction of the professional identity of primary school teachers during initial training and the first years at work" (MIMECO-EDU2010-20852-C02-01).

### **Virtual environments where young people learn**

As we explained in Napoli, when we try to understand young people learning experiences inside and outside secondary schools in the project Living and learning with new literacies in and outside school: contributions for reducing school drop-out, exclusion and abandonment among youth" (MIMECO-EDU2011-24122), we transit, as Milne (2006) notes through "the interplay between physical spaces and virtual spaces" (Sharpe, Beetham and De Freitas, 2010: xvii). As Milne, we identify in our ethnographical research formal physical spaces (classrooms and seminar rooms), physical social spaces (playgrounds), physical transition spaces (corridors), physical private spaces (students' residence), virtual social spaces (in the case of this research, Facebook, Dropbox, Googlesite). What seems clear is that for any learning

activity, young people “may combine or recombine various combinations of these types of spaces” (Sharpe, Beetham and De Freitas, 2010: xviii). These spaces configure also, the multi-sites fields where our ethnographic research takes place.

### **Conclusions**

Wittel (2000) notes that “Like the objects of ethnographic inquiry—people—ethnography itself is on the move. It is moving away from "fields" as spatially defined localities towards socio-political locations, networks, and multi-sited approaches. And it is moving from physical spaces to digital spaces”.

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## **Nurse students attitudes towards ICT in education and clinic in Denmark.**

*Raymond Kolbæk (Aarhus, Denmark)*

It has been reported, that clinical nurses through time have been reluctant to embrace ICT technologies, and experiences has shown the same reluctance among nurse students towards use of ICT in their studies and clinicals.

In an era of emerging use of ICT in nursing education and health care it is important to have knowledge of the attitudes of ICT within health professions, in this paper it will be nurse students.

Few studies have focused on how the patterns of nurse students' attitudes have been to ICT in educational and clinical practice. This paper will report some specific results from a study that uncovered nurse students' attitudes towards ICT in 2002 and the development in those attitudes among nurse students in 2012 in Denmark.

The study was inspired by Pierre Bourdieu's methodical approach to a multi-faceted data collection and Steiner Kvale's methods of interviewing were used as a practical guide for conduction the focus group interviews. Through the theoretical lens of Bourdieu it was possible to construct the field of "ICT in nursing education" and the student positions herein expressed through four constructed attitude positions.

The study consisted of a survey of ICT implementation in the Danish educational system, from primary and secondary education and subsequent nursing education in the period of 1970 - 2001. Then a survey was conducted amongst first year nursing students before focus group interview was completed. Those formed the empirical basis for a construction of both a construction of the field of ICT in nursing education and the construction of nursing students' ICT habitus and ICT capital, which could be categorized in four positions of attitudes.

The results can be discussed as a basis for developing strategies for implementation of ICT and development of e-learning in educational and clinical settings for nurse students and thereby contribute with new knowledge and understanding of the it-based learning context and the processes within that context. The results may encourage the efforts that in these years is being made to enhance the implementation of elearning in nursing education in Denmark and abroad.

**Keywords:** Nurse students, attitudes, ICT, education, resistance.

**Affiliation to the call:** I am one of the stakeholders in a web based blended learning approach to develop an online version of the Danish nursing curriculum at VIA University College.

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## **Exploring the Online Students' Learning Context in their Own Home**

*Anita Lyngsø (Viborg, Denmark)*

*Keywords: online learning, educational ethnography, nursing education, observation at home, methodological challenges.*

The underlying basis for this paper is research-based evaluation of a digitally innovative education program in nursing, at the Faculty of Health Sciences, VIA University College in Denmark – called “NETeducation.” The purpose of NETeducation is to develop an e-didactic approach to professional learning; in an individual, educational and organizational perspective (Nielsen et al 2011). As all professional educations must, NETeducation enters into the challenges of aligning the interaction between scholastic learning and practical learning. Their new approach includes a clear focus on preparing students to engage in digital and high-tech healthcare. Research shows that young people's use of technology educationally, leads to the achievement of digital literacy or ‘technacy,’ (Borgnakke 2012) but also that the nursing students’ IT habitus may complicate this. (Kolbæk 2013) Furthermore, the e-pedagogical approach challenges 100 years of tradition with emphasis on classroom teaching (ibid.)

The project is methodologically inspired by both ethnographic methods and evaluation research. (Borgnakke 2013a, Dahler-Larsen 2003) The methodological approach draws on international experiences with scholastic and educational ethnographical methods and case studies - described both as blended methodology and multi-sited. (Hammersley, Atkinson 1996, Borgnakke 2013b, Marcus 1995) This means that periods of participant observation alternate with spontaneous conversations, interviews and document collection in the different learning contexts; the classroom, the digital classroom, the clinical settings and at home with the students.

In this paper, the focus will be on observations at the students’ homes and the methodological challenges this presents. The first periods of observation at home with students show examples of how they create their own strategies and a digital space for interactions, communication and learning, where it has been experimented with employment of various methods which are suitable to follow the students’ online and offline activities in this space. The paper will provide an insight into what the project achieves by observing in the students' homes and not merely following the students in the more institutional learning contexts, such as classrooms and clinical settings.

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## **Ethnography in the Danish Veterinary Learning Environment**

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*Keywords: Educational ethnography, veterinary education, learning contexts, game based learning*

The overall objective of this project is research-based development, implementation and evaluation of a game-based learning concept to be used in the veterinary education.

Herd visits and animal contact are essential in the training of veterinary competences and obligations during education. Yet veterinary students have little possibility to reach a proper level of confidentiality in their own skills/abilities as they have no “training-facilities” (1). One possible solution could be to provide a safe, virtual environment (Game-based) where students can practice interdisciplinary clinical skills in an easy-accessible, interactive setting. A playable demo using Classical Swine Fever in a pig herd as an example has been produced.

To tailor the game concept to the specific veterinary learning environment and in the effort to assure compliance with both learning objectives and the actual learning processes of the veterinary students, the project contains both a developmental aspect (game development) and an exploration of the academic (scholastic) and profession (practice) oriented learning context.

The initial phase of the project has focused on preliminary exploration of the actual learning context, providing an important starting point for upcoming focus on research based development, implementation and evaluation of a game-based virtual environment in this course context.

In the academic (scholastic) and profession (practice) oriented learning context of a veterinary course in Herd Health Management (Pig module) course, ethnographic studies has been conducted, using multiple data collection methods; participant observation, spontaneous dialogues and interviews (2,3). All course related activities in the different learning spaces (commercial pig herds, auditoriums, post-mortem examinations, independent group work) has been followed.

This paper will describe the project with a special focus on the initial exploration of the

veterinary learning context in terms of theory, empirical data and the methods.

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## **Multi-Sited Ethnographic Educational Research – Combining Classic Fieldwork, Video Diaries and Digital Letters**

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*Keywords: Nursing education, educational ethnography, video diaries, digital letters, multi-vocal and multi-sited*

This paper reflects the multi-sited educational, ethnographical study of a class following an experimental model for profession-oriented learning. The class was enrolled in 2009 at *The School of Nursing in Aarhus at the Faculty of Health Sciences, VIA University College* in Denmark. The class, named the 'E-class,' followed what, in the field, was called 'an experimental educational model based on experienced-based learning' (Nielsen et al. 2011), which can be regarded as being founded upon two basic principles: (1) studies in clinical settings always preceded classroom teaching ("practice-before-theory") and, (2) the time allocated for students, clinical instructors -as well as lecturers from the school - to work together was increased - ("the recurrent pedagogical concept.") (Røn Noer, 2014). The class graduated in January 2013. This research aims to explore the educational trajectories of students in the 'E-class.'

In mapping out the field, "virtual or 'real', lived or cyber" (Kidd, 2013), educational ethnography gives voices to those involved in learning and teaching, in diverse learning spaces and time. (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007; Marcus 1995; Borgnakke 1996ab; Borgnakke 2010) The design used to explore the experimental educational model, uses classic long-term fieldwork as described by Borgnakke (1996ab; 2013b) - mixed with video diaries and digital letters. As a whole, using blended methodology would reflect the field and give voices to the students in different learning contexts, for example; the classroom, the clinical practice, the campus and learning spaces created by each student in their own contexts and in time and space - not solely defined by the researcher. In this sense, the ethnographic framework is 'a mix of methods and voices, and will be blended to the same degree as the field of practice' (Borgnakke 2013a).

Conducting the research has led to considerations of a number of issues concerning the knowledge generated, when mixing observations with voices and narratives told by the students in video diaries and digital letters.

This paper aims to contribute to the debate of mixing methods and voices, elucidating possibilities and constraints when the field is not only multi-sited, but also multi-vocal and

multi- media.

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## **Open formations: networked thinking & tinkering**

*Rikke Toft Nørgaard (Aarhus, Denmark)*

This paper takes as its point of departure the online-offline course “Design: theory, method & practice” that is part of the Master’s program in *IT Didactic Design* at Aarhus University and runs for the second time in the spring of 2014. The course tries to connect online networked learning in design teams within higher education with, on the one hand, international research communities and conferences – by making the student’s partake and contribute to these through making blog posts, prezis and video pitches – and, on the other hand, actual production of IT didactic designs based on fieldwork in and explorations of physical learning contexts – by making the students interact with and involve their participants (children) through processes of participatory design, ideation, digital fabrication and design thinking. The course is designed to give students insights into how the actual design of technologies impact learning contexts through designerly engaged conversations around digital literacy, digital fabrication and design thinking. This is done in order to facilitate an imaginative approach to digital technologies where technologies no longer are ‘black boxed’ solutions or packages – what might be labeled the content consumption/creation approach to digital technologies – but becomes something we build and design together to give rise to new educational settings and approaches that enable design competence, exploratory ideation and transformative learning interactions giving students the capacity to act creatively and innovative towards individual, educational and societal challenges – what might be labeled the expressive digital design literacy approach to digital technologies.

This paper presents a multi-level case study and investigation of central potentials and pitfalls of this specific online course geared towards making participants engage and intervene in offline learning contexts and real research communities. The course specifically draws upon pedagogical ‘design thinking’ and ‘design bildung’ which suggests that to engage in (didactic) design theory and design processes one must engage in participatory production of reflective designs with others in real-life contexts. Hence, to make the online course connect with offline learning contexts requires careful and reflective structuring of both online/offline design tasks and the internal/external communities of practice students partake in in order for their interactions, communications and experiences to be satisfactory instructive designerly as well as scholarly. Using ethnographic methods the paper explores and discusses the course and its new patterns of communications and interactions in and across design teams

## ***LabLife: Developing an Educational Virtual World Platform for Labrador Archaeology and Heritage***

*Evie Plaice (New Brunswick, Canada)*

My graduate student and I are part of a larger team of researchers, including archaeologists, historians and ethnographers, who are exploring Inuit occupation in southeastern Labrador. Our task is to make materials generated by the research accessible to local schools. We chose to do this through developing a virtual world platform, part of which is a Labrador-like village called Port Chance.

In various ways as we developed *LabLife*, we encountered many challenges in converting conventionally researched ethnographic and archaeological materials into suitable elements of our new virtual platform. Initially, stakeholders were concerned that we emulate the environment of Labrador as closely as possible. For us, this initiated an enduring quest to understand and to some degree honour the singular aesthetics of virtual worlds. As anyone familiar with these environments will recognise, virtual worlds are not exact renditions of real environments. How much authenticity could, or indeed should we strive to recreate in *LabLife*? This particular quest for authenticity, however, was soon overshadowed by a deeper concern for representing the complex social and archaeological experience of Labrador authentically on the multifaceted platform that *LabLife* offers. Our major objective was to provide access to project-generated research. This requires significant background and context that showcase the focus of current research findings. Occasionally, esoteric findings of focussed research challenge valued understandings that underpin popular public and political opinion. Sometimes they provide small but vital additions to a broad understanding of the past within and beyond the actual site. Each element incorporated into *LabLife* has required decisions about the nature of the message. This spring, we return to Labrador to introduce *LabLife* to its major stakeholders: the schools, teachers and students who will be using it. We anticipate many challenges during this process. But our hope is that Labrador students, already well versed in social media as a means of communicating between isolated small communities, will take to *LabLife* and make it their own.

Here, I will discuss the layers of authenticity negotiated in producing *LabLife* and presenting anthropology in a virtual world online.

*Key Words: Virtual; archaeology; ethnography; history; Labrador*

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LabLife Website [http://labradorcura.com/site/?page\\_id=8](http://labradorcura.com/site/?page_id=8)

Understanding the Past to Build the Future' Website <http://www.mun.ca/labmetis/>

## Exploring young people learning experiences through visual representations.

### Between on and offline, in and out school

*Raquel Miño Puigcercós<sup>1</sup> & Juana M<sup>a</sup> Sancho Gil (Barcelona Spain)*

**Keywords:** Visual Ethnography, Learning, ICT, Secondary School.

If we consider the knowledge young people need to acquire and develop in order to actively participate in social life (Lanskhear & Knobel, 2003) their necessities are far from being catered for in the traditional curriculum that prevails in most secondary schools, not only Spain but in most countries. Every day we have more information, tools and literacies that are shaping the way we learn and understand our world. Consequently, the needed knowledge and competencies are not always being included in our formal education (Gillen & Barton, 2010; Vivancos, 2008).

This paper is based on the RTD project “Living and learning with new literacies in and outside school: contributions for reducing school drop-out, exclusion and abandonment among youth” (Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competiveness. EDU2011-24122). It aims to understand which aspects influence the way that young people learn and how they perceive their own learning networks and spaces, through five ethnographies. We invited students from five secondary schools to be researchers in collaboration with the university team. However, this contribution is only focused on one of the ethnographical studies carried out in a secondary school from Sant Carles de la Ràpita. The principal authors were the eleven 17 to 19 years old students and their Art teacher, in the context of an extracurricular activity.

On starting the field study, we quickly recognized that shifting from inside to outside school premises was absolutely necessary, but not easy. The participants showed us that they were learning every minute; that learning “is happening all around us, everywhere, and it is powerful” (Thomas & Brown, 2011: 17). We needed, then, to shift constantly from the inside to the outside of school premises and from online to offline spaces. Secondly, their discourses about the inside of school were very homogeneous and easy to build, yet they did not know how to explore and describe their experiences out-of-school. For that reason, we decided to focus on these experiences, which ranged from ballet to computing, travelling, cooking or drawing.

We wanted them to generate their own questions and their own answers, to understand their culture and perceptions without restricting the range of their descriptions. Finally, we decided

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to do an image-based ethnography, which allowed us to work with images, videos, paintings, web pages, maps, etc. They started representing their learning spaces through images and visual maps (Leitch, 2010) with a common question “How do we learn, communicate and relate in and out of school?”

The presentation analyses pictures, maps and videos to prove how they understand and connect the wide array of spaces, both *real* and virtual, where they learn. The ethnographic process shows how interconnected offline and online contexts are, and how young people are constantly shifting from one context to another.

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## **Professionalism in practice - Collecting videographies of classroom events**

*Clemens Wieser (Graz, Austria)*

The experience of a virtuous teacher strikes us because we can observe a complex situation handled professionally without being able to pinpoint single properties of professionalism. A teacher who performs professionally is immersed in skilful activity, sees ways to achieve a goal, is able to make subtle and refined situational discriminations and distinguish situations that require one reaction from those that demand another. To create such a performance, teachers rely on their educational professionalism, professionalism that is not directly related to subject knowledge, but relies on moral educational aims. Theoretically professionalism in practice is addressed from two perspectives: From a post-critical perspective, teaching is enacted professionally by tacit comprehension of classroom events and situated reaction. From a post-structuralist perspective, involvement is expressed by the teacher self whose practice corresponds with educational aims. A complementary use of post-critical and post-structuralist perspectives indicates that professionalism of teachers is dependent on both involved self that knows and reflects in action and moral subject that provides the analytical horizon for doing so. Both perspectives are combined to explore educational knowing of teachers and comprehend professionalism in practice.

**Methodological Framework:** The methodological framework employs ethnographic methods for fieldwork and experiments with videographies of classroom events. Hereby the framework adds documentary method (Bohnsack, Pfaff & Weller 2010) and objective hermeneutics methods (Oevermann 2004) to reconstruct the orientation framework teachers rely on for professional teaching. To collect data on professionalism in practice, our fieldwork focuses on teachers with extensive experience and expertise. This study focuses on teachers at expert level according to Dreyfus & Dreyfus (2005, 782) who professionally manage classroom events due to incorporated and a-theoretical knowing. The expert teacher is an involved and experienced performer that sees goals and salient aspects of an event, sees what needs to be done and decides how to do it thanks to a vast repertoire of situational discriminations. Data collection with expert teachers is initiated with a random sample of teachers who show characteristics of expertise in practice. To get inducted to teacher practices of professionalism, we attend classes and take our twofold epistemological framework as a starting point for observation. Observations are informed by an ethnographical lens (Walford 2009) that provides a resource for initial comprehension of educational knowing through “entering a classroom culture” (Putney & Frank 2008, 217). Collecting videographies of classroom events (Dinkelaker & Herrle 2009) we document situated educational knowing of teachers in class as well as we use

audio data in interviews to document reflective educational knowing in teacher narratives.

Conclusions: Professional development is a central issue for both initial and further teacher education. We analyse teacher practice for structural scaffoldings of professionalism and aims to provide an ethnographic account on professionalism in practice that reflects in teacher involvement in classroom events and detachment in their reflection.

Relationship to the call: Our focus on professionalism in practice looks at how teachers learn to be professional. Epistemological schemes and methodological frameworks are used in a complementary way to comprehend practice and the structural scaffoldings that support it.

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