

Textual Practices in the New Media Digital Landscape: Messing with Digital Literacies

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Outline for today's webinar: Linking literacies, learning and technologies

- New Literacy Studies (NLS) and the digital landscape for learning
- Theory and Pragmatics in educational research and practice
- Academic literacies, learning and technologies
- Talking past one other?
- Digital Literacies': ambiguous and infinitely elastic?
- Implications and future directions – a new approach?


What is meant by “The New Literacy Studies”

- ❑ asserts that multiple literacies exist
- ❑ has an historical sensibility
- ❑ emphasises informal learning in everyday practices embedded in networks of support
- ❑ attends to the textual and semiotic aspects of learning
- ❑ uses ethnographic methodologies
- ❑ takes an ecological approach



Limitations of the New Literacy Studies approach

- strongly rooted in linguistics and social semiotics
- a tendency to ‘bracket off’ materiality
- tends to pay less attention to the virtual spaces of digital media than to practices involving printed texts



The fields of literacy and of learning technology both exist in a policy climate that places high value upon more pragmatic orientations towards knowledge and learning. In many respects this orientation contrasts markedly with critical approaches such as that of the NLS with its concern with power and authority around textual practice.

Theory And Pragmatics In Educational Research And Practice




Academic Literacies, & Learning Technologies

- Emergence at particular historical moments
- Connections and Overlaps
- Contrasts and Contradictions



Talking past one another

- ❑ Academic literacies slow to respond to digital landscape
- ❑ Learning technologies lack of recognition of the importance of textual practice



Has the concept of ‘literacies’ lost its ethnographic and disruptive edge through its complex re-emergence and co-option in the messy term ‘digital literacies?’

**Implications And Future Directions
Do We Need A New Approach?**



Digital literacies frameworks

- Qualities, skills, attributes?
- The idealised ‘user’
- Need to return to situated practice
- Danger of deficit models



Actor-network theory

- ❑ Compatible with NLS
- ❑ Posthumanism
- ❑ Nonhuman actors
- ❑ Away from individual social actors



A comparative media studies

- how digital and print traditions of communication intersect in practice (e.g. Hayles)
- dispersed alliances of people, machines, texts and software tools configured by learning institutions (Orlikowski)



In conclusion

It is important to find spaces to make visible the embedded and implicit understandings, assumptions and ideological positions that are carried by terms such as literacy/ digital/ network.