

A PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL TELEMEDIA COUNCIL

THE JOURNAL OF
MEDIA LITERACY

VOLUME 65, NUMBERS 1 & 2 * 2018

Praxis & Partnerships
2nd International Media Literacy
Research Symposium

GUEST EDITORS BELINHA DE ABREU & VITOR TOMÉ

WITH BRAYTON • BRITES • CAMPOS • CASEY • CATALÃO • CHRYSSANTHOPOULOU
CICCONE • CONNOLLY • CONTRERAS-PULIDO • CULVER • DI RICCO
FORSLER • FORSMAN • FRIESEM • HOECHSMANN • GUTIÉRREZ-MARTÍN
MIHAILIDIS • PARRY • POPOVA • RATNER • REES • SORIANI
TORREGO-GONZÁLEZ • TREJO-QUINTANA • WATSON • YARNYKH

THE JOURNAL OF MEDIA LITERACY

National Telemedia Council, Inc.

1922 University Avenue • Madison, WI 53726
(608) 218-1182 • NTelemedia@aol.com
www.NationalTelemediaCouncil.org

www.JournalofMediaLiteracy.org

EDITORIAL BOARD

EDITOR

Marieli Rowe

GUEST EDITORS

Belinha De Abreu & Vitor Tomé

MEMBERS

Karen Ambrosh

Neil Andersen

Belinha De Abreu

Henry Jenkins

Martin Rayala

Copyright © 2018 National Telemedia Council, Inc.
Reprints by permission only. ISSN: 1944-4982

CREDITS

Visuals within each article were provided by the respective authors or are property of NTC. Some images and photographs used herein have been found on the Internet and are used here under Fair Use Guidelines and are intended for educational purposes only.

ABOUT THE JOURNAL OF MEDIA LITERACY

The Journal of Media Literacy (first published in 1953 as Better Broadcasts News and later as *Telemedium*, *The Journal of Media Literacy*) is published by the National Telemedia Council (NTC), the oldest ongoing media literacy education organization in the United States, having been founded in 1953.

The editors invite special guest editors for particular issues of the *Journal*.

The Journal of Media Literacy reflects the philosophy of NTC, which takes a positive, non-judgmental approach to media literacy education as an essential life skill for the 21st Century. The National Telemedia Council is an organization of diverse professionals interested in the field of media literacy education. NTC encourages free expression of views on all aspects of media literacy in order to encourage learning and increase growth of understanding of issues in Media Literacy. Any opinions expressed in *The Journal* or by individual members of NTC, therefore, do not necessarily represent policies or positions of the National Telemedia Council.

Praxis & Partnerships—2nd International Media Literacy Research Symposium**FROM THE EDITORS**

- 2 **Portugal, a Place for Curiosity, Exploration, and New Understandings**
By Marieli Rowe, Karen Ambrosh
- 4 **Praxis & Partnerships: 2nd International Media Literacy Research Symposium In Lisbon, Portugal**
By Belinha De Abreu, Vitor Tomé
- RESEARCH**
- 8 **Guilty pleasure or critical discourse? Feeling our way through culture in a digital and post-logic era.**
By Michael Hoehsmann, Alfonso Gutiérrez-Martín, Alba Torrego-González
- 13 **Civic media as a cultural dialogue: A professional development journey of Arab and Jewish teachers via documentary filmmaking in Israel**
By Evanna Ratner, Yonty Friesem
- 19 **Is Participation in Community Media an Agent of Change?**
By Rob Watson
- 24 **Digital competence and the future media citizen: A preliminary conceptual analysis**
By Michael Forsman
- 30 **Media and Information Literacy: Growth Through Collaborative Pedagogy**
By Spencer Brayton, Natasha Casey
- 36 **Protecting or Empowering: News Literacy Education in the Midst of the Post-Truth Debate**
By Ioli Campos
- 40 **Understanding the Geopolitics of News: Towards a Model of International News Literacy**
By Massimo Di Ricco
- 46 **Journalism pondered as a learning facilitator tool in the context of lifelong learning**
By Maria José Brites, Angela Rees, Paloma Contreras-Pulido, Daniel Catalão
- 52 **Keynote A Novel Civic IDEA: Building the capacity of youth to critique and create media in digital culture**
By Paul Mihailidis
- 63 **Role of Educators in Forming of Media Image of Education Organization: Media Literacy Aspect**
By Veronika Yarnykh
- 65 **Is there an influence between the relationships mediated by digital contexts and learning environments' social climate? A research in Italian and French secondary schools.**
By Alessandro Soriani
- 71 **Media Literacy Education in Primary Years: Carrying on Regardless.**
By Steve Connolly, Becky Parry
- 77 **An Analysis of Media Literacy Messages in Popular Children's Television**
By Sherri Hope Culver
- 82 **Media literacy—definitions and methods: Analysis of media literacy in Bulgaria**
By Jana Popova
- 87 **Towards infrastructure literacy in media education**
By Ingrid Forsler
- 92 **Construction and incorporation of the media literacy concept in communication studies in Mexico: First approach**
By Janneth Trejo-Quintana
- 97 **Media literacy: concepts and misconceptions (or the risk to use the same term to report on different sets of skills)**
By Katerina Chryssanthopoulou
- 102 **Digital Citizenship 2.0: Beyond Fear Mongering**
By Michelle Ciccone
- AWARD WINNERS**
- 107 **NTC's 65 Anniversary Year: Jessie McCause Award**

Is there an influence between the relationships mediated by digital contexts and learning environments' social climate? A research in Italian and French secondary schools.

Alessandro Soriani, University of Bologna, Italy / Paris 3—Sorbonne Nouvelle, France

ALESSANDRO SORIANI is a PhD in Pedagogical Sciences at the University of Bologna's Department of Education, and in Information and Communication Sciences at the École Doctorale 276 - Arts et Médias of the Sorbonne-Nouvelle Paris 3. His research explores the influence of relationships that develop within digital environments on the social climate of learning environments. His scientific interests are ICTs, Media and Information Literacy in educational and pedagogical contexts. Currently within the framework of the University of Bologna he's working on a cooperation project with West-Bank Palestinian schools about inclusion and empowerment. He collaborates with the Council of Europe's Education Department for developing guidelines for the ministers committee for Digital Citizenship Education and Online Resources Development projects. He also works as teacher trainer (University of Bologna, Centro Zaffiria, Council of Europe's Pestalozzi Programme) and facilitator for youth's participatory processes (Ferfilò A.S.D.).



Abstract

Young pre-teens attending junior high schools are going through a very delicate period: they are not just engaged in a new and more complex school career, but they are also engaged in their daily tasks of training and negotiating their identities and their roles in the different peer groups. This complex scenario is expanded by their first experiences, far from the eyes of adults, with technologies: tools that add, on the relational universe just described, an existential dimension that opens up new forms of communication mediated by digital contexts. The contributions presents a research run in 2 Italian and 2 French schools, which involved 365 students and 21 teachers in order to provide an answer to these questions: Is there an influence of the technologies on the relational dynamics that occur between students and students and between students and teachers? Which kind of relationship? Which kind of relational dynamics and of technologies are involved? Is there an influence between the relationships mediated by digital contexts and the social climate of a learning environment? Which kind of relationship?

Keywords: ICT's, mediated environments, digital literacy, digital citizenship, media literacy

The learning environments' social climate

It is by now several decades that the research community is engaged in the study around the topic of learning environments. One of the firsts contributors was Dewey, who identified an *environment* as the sum of “those conditions that promote or hinder, stimulate or inhibit, the characteristic activities of a living being” (Dewey, 1916, p. 45). In this sense, an environment is seen as a “medium” which plays a fundamental role as facilitator or inhibitor of learning processes and social interactions. A concept of classroom emerges as a “systemic environment” (Moos, 1979) organized in four variables: physical environment, organization elements, characteristics of classrooms' actors and social climate. For Moos, social climate doesn't represent simply one of the variables but it's considered as “the main mediator of the other three's influences” (Moos, 1979, p. 10), an ensemble that the researcher

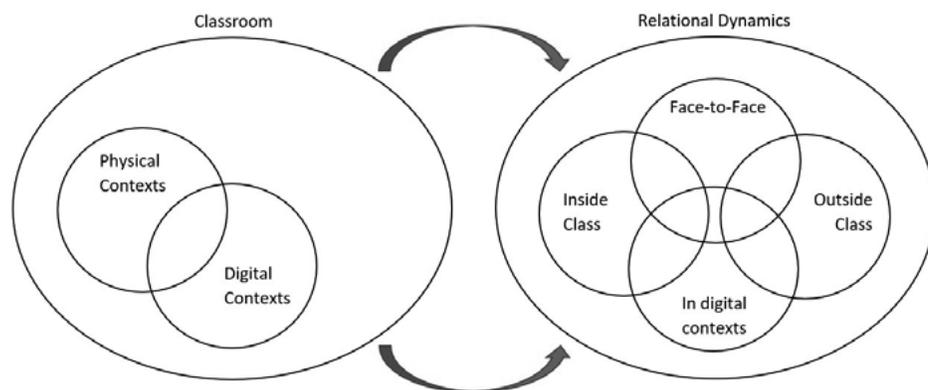
considers open: determined not only by internal factors (rules, relationships inside the classroom, school's policies...) but also external (families, extra-scholastic contexts...) (Renati & Zanetti, 2009).

It is in the frame of this debate that one can find the concept of social climate, a concept widely approached by researchers, often associated to “ecologic” terms like “atmosphere”, “environment” or “milieu.” Parker and Kaltsounis (1986) consider it a relational atmosphere established by all the interaction's models inside a class (decision making processes, students' participation models, way of dealing with problems ...). More recently, Ambrose and his group (2010) identified it as the “ensemble of intellectual, social, emotional and physical milieux where students learn”. One of the most comprehensive definitions come from Allodi (2010): she uses the terminology of “Learning Environments' Social Climate” (LESC) to define all those psycho-social characteristics of learning environments which model the relationships teachers-students and students-peers. Her work, in line with others like Adelman & Taylor (2005), Chiari (1994) and Genovese & Kanisza (1989), identifies as elements that impact on LESC, students' and teachers' expectations and behaviours, teachers' communication and classroom management's style and interpersonal relationships and group dynamics.

Even if one can find materials about the influence of ICTs on learning processes, it's not possible to state the same regarding the influence of ICTs in schools on a social-relational angle. In other words, there's a lack of findings in scientific literature, regarding the influence of the interactions that take place on digital contexts on the learning environments' social climate.

These interactions, though, play a key role among the very dense relational network that one can find in contexts like secondary schools, where pre-adolescents (11-15) are living a very delicate moment of

their development: not only are they facing a new and more challenging school career, but they are also engaged in shaping and negotiating their identities and their roles. Pre-adolescents seek primarily two things: autonomy from their adult models (Winnicott, 1961) and the recognition of their peers (Iaquinta & Salvo, 2017). At this already-enough-complex “emotional storm” (Winnicott, 1961), has been added an layer of complexity represented by technologies (boyd, 2014; Ito et al., 2010). Youngsters, 11-15 years of age, are experiencing the use of ICTs and social media more and more, and this happens far from their parents vigilance, and instead, in their rooms or when they are outside as well as when they are at school.



A dialogic model

Being a teen in the networked age is “complicated” (boyd, 2014) but also so full of new communication opportunities. Now youngsters can interact seamlessly with their peers, from the very moment where they wake up, till they go to bed (Caron & Caronia, 2007). They don't interact anymore exclusively through traditional face-to-face exchanges, but through exchanges mediated by digital contexts.

Within this framework, a classroom can be considered as an intersection between physical and digital contexts, and it's in a relationship of reciprocal influence with the universe of relational dynamics that interest students, teachers and families. Similarly, the relational dynamics involved can also be seen as an intersection between four dimensions of interaction: inside class, outside class, face-to-face and online relational dynamics.

Going deep in the problematization, two categories of digital contexts have been identified: Official Digital Contexts (ODC), and Non-Official Digital Context (NoDC).

ODCs gather all those digital environments provided officially, and formally recognized as valid for work and school-related practices and exchanges, by school institutes. To this categorization belong elements such as electronic platforms used to manage the class-register, Learning Content Management Systems, communication systems between teachers, parents, students, and other services for cloud computing and collaborative online work.

NoDCs include all those platforms and digital environments that are spontaneously used by students, teachers and parents which are not formally recognized, nor provided, by school institutes. Some examples are IM services like WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger and other social media like Snapchat or Instagram.

These digital contexts have a relationship of continuity with physical and offline ones: it's really difficult that one particular dynamic belongs exclusively to an offline or an online ODC/NoDC context. The individuals involved are the same and, if an information—a bad note—is issued by a specific official or non-official digital context or via written or face-to-face communication, this will have in all cases consequences and reactions in all the rest of the contexts.

The research

With all the new opportunities that ICT have brought, peoples—and of course students, too—have more and more occasions to interact in many ways. This thick and seamless network of interactions assumes an existential dimension which cannot be embanked neither from the boundaries of the class, neither relegated to the scholastic schedules, beyond the sense of place and time (Meyrowitz, 1986).

The use of group chats, the fact that teens don't separate from their devices not even when they're attending lessons are only few of the problems that are connected to the presence of ICTs in schools. Issues and concerns that are becoming more and more difficult to analyze and to manage which need to be taken

in consideration with a profound, critical and honest gaze. One of biggest issue is that normally ICTs are allowed in schools only for educational and cognitive

The use of group chats, the fact that teens don't separate from their devices not even when they're attending lessons are only few of the problems that are connected to the presence of ICTs in schools. .

purposes, so the trend is to ignore or forbid everything that concerns a different use of them.

The point of the research was to: give a phenomenological overview of the issue which would help professionals in the field of education to have a better understanding of the influence of digital-contexts-mediated-relationships on social climate in educational settings; raise a reflection on the lack of consideration of digital-contexts-mediated-relationships among the elements that determine, or which have some kind of influence, on the social climate of learning environments; hypothesise some pedagogical priority, and some possible future research development.

The research-questions that guided the entire work are as follows:

- Is there an influence of the technologies on the relational dynamics that occur between students and students and between students and teachers? Which kind of relationship? Which kind of relational dynamics and of technologies are involved?
- Is there an influence between the relationships mediated by digital contexts and the social climate of a learning environment? Which kind of relationship?

The work here described have mainly a phenomenological approach, but it's been denoted by an "integrated" perspective which seen a mixed research methodology of both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Creswell, 2015; Greene, 2002, 2008; Johnson, 2014).

The research described in this contribution lasted for four years (from October 2014 till March 2018) and took place in two Italian and two French public secondary schools placed in centered neighborhoods,

but relatively close to the suburbs in order to ensure a balanced social-economical background mix due to the presence of privileged and low-privileged families.

From the teachers

From the data analysis collected from teachers emerged that ODCs are considered very useful and secure tools for:

- official exchanges with other colleagues, with students and with student's parents: the fact that these digital contexts are provided by schools, and the fact that teacher can monitor all the communications give them more confidence;
- managing the class in terms of keeping track of tasks and materials;
- creating and setting new learning conditions;
- foster student's motivation, by dealing with technologies;
- develop Media and Information Literacy among students.

On the other hand, NoDCs suffer of more mistrust. The reasons of this divide are found within the following elements:

- lack of controllability of these environments;
- NoDCs are perceived as the most relevant source of distraction;
- students are not aware of the risks connected to the use of NoDCs;
- misuses of NoDCs by parents (group chats used to discuss superficially about school's issues, conflicts...)

The issue of teachers' involvement in monitoring involvement in monitoring and managing all the potential problems that may come from digital contexts was one of the most important. Some teachers mentioned a privacy issue and reported that NoDCs are perceived as an element of intrusion into their personal lives. Some teachers indicated they don't want to mix professional with personal life, but on the other

hand some other teachers stated that in any case their involvement is inevitable and key:

"Forbid? No... you can't forbid anything, not anymore... even ourselves are knee-dipped into it! I think that we can, and we have to show to our kids a different way to use technology, more just..." (Italian teacher)

"Well... it's certainly not because we are forbidding it that our kids won't use their smartphones in class. It's not a matter of forbidding, but a matter of sharing rules and mutual trust..." (French teacher)

From the students

The majority of the students reached by the research personally possess a mobile device (84% first, 93% second, 96% third, 100% fourth school year). Despite concerns of parental control of online practices, most of the students (57% first, 50% second, 69% third, 73% fourth school year) are free from parental vigilance when they are connected to their mobile devices. In this case, 76% of subjects bring their mobiles at school (58% first, 74% second, 86% third and fourth school year) and declared to use it also during breaks, such as when they go to the bathroom and during some lessons. It's interesting that the most popular uses are to interact with others, to entertain themselves and to do other things such as control social media or take pictures or videos.

For what purposes do you use your mobile during schooltime?

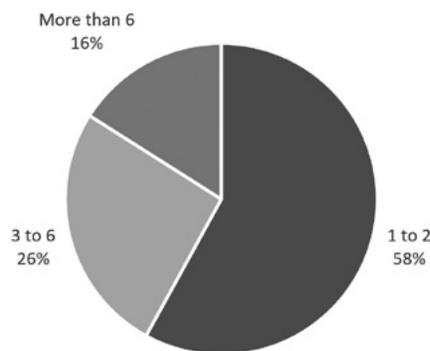
Ask for help during tests	15%
To make jokes	17%
Google something	33%
Take pictures or videos	34%
Control social media updates	50%
To play when I'm bored	60%
To chat with friends	71%

Students consider ODCs as useful tools only for educational purposes work and for those communications with teachers only connected to school. They found this digital contexts very unpractical for the relational exchanges with their peers mainly for the following reasons: this spaces are strictly controlled by

teachers, usually they don't allow group conversations, but only one-to-one exchanges and they are not user friendly in terms of mobile accessibility.

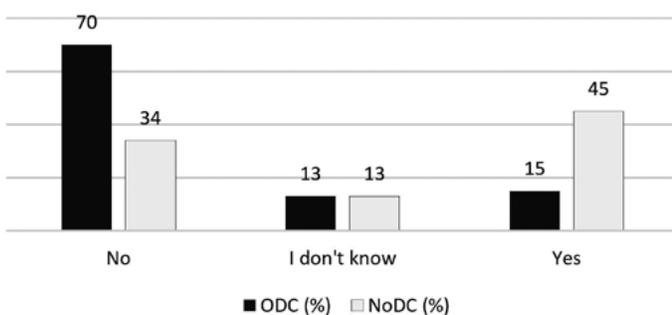
The students indicated in the research that they prefer to use NoDC. They use these spaces seamlessly both from school and from home to interact with their friends, classmates and families. Most frequently mentioned was meeting up with classmates to help each other for homeworks or for in-class tests, or simply to stay in constant contact with friends and classmates when they are home. Another notable aspect is the intense use of groupchats. Each class has at least one or two groupchats simultaneously that are used for exchange jokes, pictures, funny videos, homeworks' hints, but sometimes insults, and controversies.

Number of groupchats per class



Regarding controversies and conflicts, we propose a comparison between two histograms which show that NoDCs are a more fertile terrain for in class conflicts or unpleasant situations than ODCs: the dark column represents the unpleasant in class situations that are related to ODCs' exchanges and the lightened one those related to NoDC.

Are you aware of unpleasant inclass situations related to Digital Contexts' exchanges?



Of particular interest are the answers of those who wrote and talked about which kind of unpleasant situations have actually happened. In ODC these situations are mainly linked to misunderstanding between classmates or workgroups and stolen passwords in NoDC are more related to arguments between individuals and some members of a group chat, misunderstandings coming from jokes, or mocks and insults. Another aspect to underline is the feeling of being cut out from group chats: 45 students declared that they actually feel excluded by these groups and this was hurtful to them.

The processes just described reveal a relationship of mutual influence between classroom everyday life and digital contexts used. In each group interview emerged episodes of in-class conflicts started from digital arguments, and vice versa, and this cannot not have a sort of influence on the LESC.

Main conclusions

The formal educational contexts—more specifically, secondary schools—have more and more become interconnected environments (online and offline) where students, teachers and families are plunged into a very complex and seamlessly changing intersections between ODCs and NoDCs. A very complex situation to analyze and to regulate that makes the issue of Digital Context Mediated Relational Dynamics one of the priorities among the educational challenges of the next years.

From the data collected emerge a small but quite interesting scenario where secondary schools' students possess and bring their smartphones inside classrooms' walls, where events that occur in digital contexts are not marooned into a "cloud" but have an important influence on classroom's social climate.

In conclusion, presented here are some of the next priorities that formal education system will need to take into account in order to give an answer to the issues described in this contribution. The first one would be including Digital Context Mediated Relational Dynamics into the debate around the Learning Environments' Social Climate. Too often ICTs are considered only in relation with learning and cognitive processes and very few in correlation to social-relational dynamics. Prioritize

teacher training to face these new situations, not with “old rituals” (Meirieu, 2015), but with new ones. Very often the first reaction is to forbid and to build walls, but, as one of the teacher’s interviewed reported, it’s impossible and counter-productive to forbid what it’s impossible to forbid. A good way could be including these dynamics into educational practices and see them not as a problem but as educational opportunities; of course, trainings initiatives won’t have an impact if families are not involved with specific trainings around the topic.

Lastly, it is important to work with students in their mediated real-world environments where all the processes and negotiations are at play. Further, promoting Digital Citizenship Education projects and Media and Information Literacy initiatives is paramount to have future students and citizens aware of the risks and of the opportunities offered by digital technologies. ❖

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adelman, H. S., & Taylor, L. (2005). Classroom Climate. In S. W. Lee & P. A. Lowe (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of School Psychology*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Allodi, M. W. (2010). The meaning of social climate of learning environments: Some reasons why we do not care enough about it. *Learning Environments Research*, 13(2), 88–104. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10984-010-9072-9>
- Ambrose, S. A., Bridges, M. W., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M. C., & Norman, M. K. (2010). *How learning works: Seven research-based principles for smart teaching*. John Wiley & Sons.
- boyd, danah. (2014). *It’s Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*. New Heaven and London: Yale University Press.
- Caron, A. H., & Caronia, L. (2007). Moving cultures: Mobile communication in everyday life. *Social Science Computer Review*.
- Chiari, G. (1994). *Climi di classe e apprendimento. Un progetto di sperimentazione per il miglioramento del clima di classe in quattro città italiane*. Milano: FrancoAngeli.
- Creswell, J. W. (2015). Revisiting Mixed Methods and Advancing Scientific Practices. In S. N. Hesse-Biber & R. B. Johnson (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Multimethod and Mixed Methods Research Inquiry*. Oxford.
- Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and Education* (trad. It.). Firenze: La Nuova Italia Editrice.
- Genovese, L., & Kanizsa, S. (1989). *Manuale di gestione della classe nella scuola dell’obbligo*. Milano: FrancoAngeli.
- Greene, J. C. (2002). Mixing social inquiry methodologies. In V. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching* (pp. 251–258). Washington D.C.: AERA.
- Greene, J. C. (2008). Is Mixed Methods Social Inquiry a Distinctive Methodology? *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 2(1), 7–22.
- Iaquinta, T., & Salvo, A. (2017). *Generazione TVB. Gli adolescenti digitali, l’amore e il sesso*. Bologna: il Mulino.
- Ito, M., Baumer, S., Bittanti, M., Boyd, D., Herr-Stephenson, B., Horst, H. A., ... Tripp, L. (2010). *Hanging Out, Messing Around and Geeking Around*. Chemistry & ... https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8535.2010.01154_5.x
- Johnson, R. B. (2014). *Mixed methods research design and analysis with validity: A primer*. Department of Professional Studies, University of South Alabama, USA.
- Meirieu, P. (2015). *Faire l’école, faire la classe*. Paris: ESF.
- Meyrowitz, J. (1986). *No sense of place: The impact of electronic media on social behavior*. Oxford University Press.
- Moos, R. H. (1979). *Evaluating educational environments*. Jossey-Bass Inc Pub.
- Parker, W. C., & Kaltsounis, T. (1986). Citizenship and law-related education. In V. A. Atwood (Ed.), *Elementary school social studies: Research as a guide to practice*. (pp. 14–33). Washington D.C.: National Council for the Social Studies.
- Renati, R., & Zanetti, M. A. (2009). *Il clima positivo in classe. Uno strumento per promuovere il cambiamento*. PSICOLOGIA e Scuola, maggio-giu, 50–57.
- Winnicott, D. W. (1961). *Adolescence: struggling through the doldrums. In The Family and Individual Development*. New York: Routledge.