Participating in digital activities in Early Childhood Education and Care facilities. Sociomaterial resources employed to include and exclude participants.

*Ingvild Sørenssen, Pål Aarsand

NTNU, Norway

In this paper, we explore how children use tablets in an early childhood educational and care (ECEC) institution, focusing on how this interaction may result in both the including and excluding of participants. The study is a video-ethnographic study, following children in an ECEC institution for two weeks focusing specifically on tablet use. The children were aged 3-6 at the time of the video observation. The study is grounded in an Actor-Network Theory framework to see how children and tablets are mutually enacted, and in Goffman’s notion of participation framework, to explore how different participant positions are negotiated in situ with various interactional resources. Our findings show how children use body, verbal language, and objects as resources to control and negotiate the interactional space. It is shown how controlling the tablet is related to being positioned as the one who “owns” the turn. To access the interactional space, s/he is the one that ratifies, or not, the participants. In the process of negotiation access to the tablet activity, displaying knowledge in how to handle the application is not enough to become a ratified participant. In the process of negotiating the participation status, the children also positions, or get positioned in the local network of agency. Thereby, as the data suggests that there is not a binary of either being included or excluded into the on-going activity, but rather a continuum of participant positions which the children can one hand be placed in by others, and on the other hand can positions themselves in.

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