Touch – an important resource for collaborating in a film production practice

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The aim of the present study was to examine students’ interactions in a film production practice with iPads in the upper level of the Danish primary school (grades 4-6) through Sigrid Norris’ multimodal (inter)action analysis (Norris, 2004, 2011a, 2012a). The iPad is no longer ”The new kid on the block” in teaching practices and education research has been looking at the iPad in connection to writing, animation, emergent literacy and collaboration (Burnett et al., 2014; Davidsen, 2014; Meyer, 2013; Walsh and Simpson, 2013, 2014ab; Wohlwend, 2013, 2015). In my study, I have looked through video observations at the situated interplay between the students’ use of modes in a collaborative film production practice. Through Norris’ concept of system of representation, I analyze the students’ choice of modes in an interaction, and I draw on Norris’ concept of multimodal configuration to analyze which modes may take on special importance in the specific context (Norris, 2004, 2011a, 2012a, 2014). My findings indicate that the students’ meaning systems are constructed through embodied interaction, and especially the students’ ability to collaborate through touch is of great importance (Møller, 2017). My analysis shows that one group of students is able to collaborate using touch. In this group of students, words do not take on special importance in their collaboration but the mode of touch does (Møller, 2017). In another group of students, it is not possible to collaborate using touch, and the mode of touch seems to create conflicts (Møller, 2017). Further, my analysis shows that the touchscreen of the iPad brings great potentials into film education but also big challenges. This we have to consider when teaching film production. In addition, my study is a contribution to the field of multimodality and literacy studies and gives rise to discuss a renewed attention to media technologies and collaborative literacy practices.

Keywords: Multimodal (inter)ations analysis, iPad, film production, collaboration, touch.