



When it is real. Qualities in digitalized teaching according to teachers and students during a three year long classroom study

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In this paper focus group interviews with teachers and students in the Finnish Connected Classroom Nordic-project (CCN) school are analyzed. The interviews were done before, during and after the remote teaching periods in a lower-secondary school (from May 2020 to May 2022). According to the design in the CCN project, the interviews were related to the video recordings that prior had been accomplished in the classrooms, and they were structured around themes related to digitalization that we, the researchers, had identified as interesting and possibly challenging. Short video clips – the same sequences selected for the students and the teachers, with some exceptions – were shown to the focus groups, whereafter a discussion was opened. The video clips functioned as triggers; the discussions, especially the student discussions, tended to continue over many other topics related to digitalized teaching. The transcribed interviews were analyzed with the use of content analyses in the software program NVivo.

The theory used is based on the conception of new ethos stuff (NES) by Knobel and Lankshear (2011). According to them, the “the new” in New literacies involves both new technical stuff (NTS), related to the new affordances that the digital code in itself provides, and new ethos stuff (NES), which relates to new means for participation in literacies that are more participatory, collaborative, and distributed in nature than conventional literacies and aspects as participation, distribution and recycling are emphasized.

The aim of this paper is to discuss aspects in digitalized teaching that emerge as positive according to teachers and students, and further, to discuss the possible relation between these aspects and the concept of “new ethos stuff,” in order to thereby attempt a discussion about qualities in digitalized teaching. The analyses are carried out with the support of the questions: What types of situations related to the digitalized teaching get positive comments by the teachers, respectively the students? How are these situations related to aspects as participatory, collaborative, and distributed? What kind of possible differences or similarities are there between the teachers’ and students’ way of discussing these topics? And finally, is it possible to identify a change over time in the teachers’ and students’ approaches to digitalized teaching?

Preliminary results indicate that there is a detectable connection between the aspects of teaching that are perceived as positive, and new ethos stuff. This means that a significant amount of the positive statements about digitalized teaching concern situations or aspects where collaboration, participation, distribution or recycling are relevant for the participants. Examples of this are the students’ mentioning resources in the learning platforms, seamlessness, and situations when teachers construct “real assignments”, whereas in the teachers interviews topics related to fluidity and rapidity in the distribution are identified.