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Out-of-school literacies back into classroom

Game, video and prosumer

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Abstract

One of the core concerns in learning sciences is “What new types of learning have emerged in digital natives in the gaming generation?” There are varied ways to inquire into the question of they have learned. In 21 century, new way of reusing, remixing, and re-making information/game/image/video is in particular attractive to youths. This highlights the importance for educators and policy makers to understand where our youths are in terms of their capabilities to participate in the new media ecology. This capability can be conceptualized as prosumption. In this study, we empirically study the gaming generation bring their prosumption abilities into classroom. Prosumer is capable of intricately embedding his values and thoughts. Such insights are important and viewed as “a prerequisite” for effective participation in the 21st century information society.

Brief

The 21st century has marked an unprecedented advancement of new media. New media has become so pervasive that it has penetrated into every aspect of our society. New media literacy plays an essential role for any citizen to participate fully in the 21st century society. Researchers have documented that literacy has evolved historically in stages:

1. classic literacy (reading-writing-understanding);
2. audiovisual literacy (mostly related to electronic media);
3. digital literacy;
4. information literacy (mostly related to computer and digital media); and recently
5. new media literacy (mostly related to internet and the phenomenon of media convergence)(Chen, Wu, & Wang, 2011)

As Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona has suggested new media literacy can be viewed as a continuum from media “consuming” to media “prosuming” (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 2007). “Consuming” media literacy refers to one’s ability to access media message and use media at various proficiency levels. The rapid advancement of information and communication technologies makes the issue of access less prominent.

“Prosuming” media literacy refers to one’s ability to produce media content, in addition to consuming skills. “Prosuming” is a notion first put forward by Toffler. A “prosumer” is both a producer and consumer whose “half of production is for exchange and half of production is for self-use”. Prosumers can produce customized media products themselves, taking full advantages brought about by new technologies.

Media prosumption has two aspects: creating/producing media content, and participating in media uses. For example, students may use media tools to create a “Game Tips” video clip and upload it to YouTube. The production involves the design of media content aligned with individual ideology, cultural background and purposes at hand. The consuming aspect is integrated and implied in the process of production.

In Taiwan, gaming generation students write Game Tips articles, make Game Tips video, record Game Tips live-show in their daily practice. Those not only are kind of interesting prosumption, but also is new type of learning. How people learn? Belonging to one of the core concerns of learning sciences (Wenger, 1998).

The aim of this study was to apply the concept “prosumption” to analyze the gaming generations’ perennial core enterprise, like re-creation comic story, remix parodies of MV/news, reusing game images etc. The selected case in this project is in a northern Taiwan national university teacher education course, students with rich experience about new media. To date, 24 participants were recruited. In this study, students need to design and manage a sixty minutes course based on their prosumption of some topic or media they really interesting. We conducted a series of data about their emerged teaching plan, presentation, peer-feedback, self-reflection, revised-plan, interviews, and field note to explore their practice experiences.

Prosumer is actively engaged in media-rich environment and effectively participates in new media space. He/she understands that he/she is constructing his interpretations and there is an ample space for negotiations in co-construction of understanding in a community. Prosumer is also capable of intricately embedding his values and thoughts and critically evaluates his language in conveying his beliefs and argument. Such insights are important and viewed as “a prerequisite” for effective participation in the 21st century information society.

The 21st century skills of new media literacy are the skills that provide citizens with the base of knowledge that they need to be effective participants in the 21st century around the world. It serves our purpose if this paper is stimulates more discussions on new media literacy, especially in prosumer – an essential skill that no one in the 21st century can afford not to have.

References

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