

ICTs as Placed Resources in a Rural Kenyan Secondary School Journalism Club

Maureen Kendrick , Walter Chemjor & Margaret Early

Abstract

In this study, we draw on three interrelated concepts, i.e. placed resources, multiliteracies and the carnivalesque, to understand how information and communication technology (ICT) resources are taken up within the context of a print-based journalism club. Our research participants attend an under-resourced girls' residential secondary school in rural Kenya. We used ethnographic methods to document how the 32 club members (aged 14–18 years) used digital cameras, voice recorders and laptops with connectivity to research, conduct interviews, photograph and create texts. Key findings include shifts in identity performance, journalistic competence, and hierarchical distinctions and societal power; growing writer activism and audiences; and the emergence of imagined identities and transformative social futures. Our research challenges current skills-based approaches to introducing new literacies and highlights how the introduction of new ICT resources, when situated within collaborative practices (both research and pedagogical), can result in enhanced literacy learning and text production. These changes have not been without tensions and dilemmas, including the extent to which such practices could only occur outside the formalized classroom with its traditional practices, structures and emphasis on exam results. In addition, some of these tensions raise new questions about the role of ICTs as pedagogical tools and the tendency to 'romanticize' their potential.

Keywords: New literacies; ICT resources; Secondary school girls; Journalism club; Rural Kenya

Full text:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/09500782.2012.691513?needAccess=true>