

Embodied memory and curatorship in children's digital video production

JOHN POTTER

Centre for the Study of Children Youth and Media

ABSTRACT: Digital video production in schools is often theorised, researched and written about in two ways: either as a part of media studies practice or as a technological innovation, bringing new, "creative", digital tools into the curriculum. Using frameworks for analysis derived from multimodality theory, new literacy studies and theories of embodied identity, this study examines a video production made by two children who were taking part in a video project on the theme of self-representation and identity. Evidence was collected in the form of production notes, video interviews and the media text itself. The findings suggest that this way of working in new media can be thought of as a new literacy practice, metaphorically conceived as a form of "curatorship" of children's own lives in the uses of multimodal editing tools for the intertextual organisation of digital media assets and their subsequent exhibition to peer groups and beyond.

KEYWORDS: literacy practices, digital video, identity, curatorship

INTRODUCTION

Digital video production in primary schools in the UK is often researched and written about in two ways: either as part of a media literacy investigation or as a technological intervention, bringing new, "creative" digital tools into the curriculum. In order to provide a theoretical framework which breaks from these more conventional positions, this article analyses a primary school production slightly differently, drawing on a methodology derived from multimodal analysis and cultural theory. It begins by describing the context for the work before providing a scene-by-scene account of the video in question together with an examination of the planning materials used by the authors. Subsequent sections go on to link the video to aspects of cultural theory and multimodality, in particular how the embodied performance of memory as represented in the media text forms a kind of curatorship of experience which is itself an emergent, new media literacy practice.

BACKGROUND

The girls who produced the video analysed in the article, Katie and Aroti, were members of a class of children at the end of their time at primary school¹. Their video was one of ten produced as part of a "Children in Transition" project, conceived as a commemorative piece about their time in the school, celebrating spaces, relationships and memories just before leaving. In the case of these two girls, the production was dominated by scenes and constructs which would enable them to underline their bond with each other as it had been formed over time within the class. They had been quiet and occasionally troubled by events in school. They were regarded by their peers as a couple of "loners" without a range of other relationships to draw on. As a result of this withdrawal over time from the rest of the class, the opportunity to represent

¹ In the English National Curriculum this comes in Year 6, at the age of 11.

themselves and their time at primary school on video became a relatively solemn, quiet and restrained tour around sites of personal, mutual significance in the school, alongside interviews with important adult influences, interspersed with sequences elaborating specific memories.

DESCRIBING THE VIDEO SCENE BY SCENE

Following the methods employed by Burn and Parker (2003) to analyse video texts produced by students using an adapted version of multimodality theory, the video produced by the girls was examined scene by scene. The elements of gesture, speech, image and sound were separated out along a timeline in order to provide an account of how the different components were operating in relation to each other, the whole forming the “kineikonic mode” proposed in *Analysing Media Texts* (Burn & Parker, 2003). Other aspects which were added to the analytical framework gave an account of the *aesthetic* and *affective* elements of the video in relation to the whole production, which followed adaptations of multimodal analysis of students work using new media which were proposed by Leander and Frank (2006). Interviews and collections of artefacts rounded out the picture of the motivations and authorial strategies employed by the two girls in constructing their video, drawing out the ways in which they had composed their text and their reflections on it.

As the introduction implies, the video was a very personal account, through the six minutes and forty-seven seconds of the children's response to the task of representing their time at primary school. By comparison with other videos produced for the project, this video seems static and under-produced, not well shot and with poor sound. Sifting through the modes and motivations in the ways suggested above, however, reveals a more cohesive and subtle structure than is apparent at first viewing. Analysed in this way and contextualised by knowledge of the girls within the class, the video production is revealed as a purposeful attempt to meet the requirements of the original task concerned with identity and, in particular, to make something which relates their identity and their friendship to the environment of the school in both a temporal and a locative way. By this I mean that their production did not aim, like many others, to present comedic or parodic material, but rather sought to focus on the relationship to each other in terms of their relationship to spaces and patterns of behaviour in those spaces established over time. As will be seen later, this appears to have resonance with certain cultural theories connected with identity as it is embodied by behaviour in specific spaces (Bourdieu, 1986)

The structure of the video is set out by Katie and Aroti in a series of ten mixed locative narratives, singly or gathered in groups, interspersed with four interviews, as follows:

- Location-based narrative 1 (together – playground) 00:00-00:19
- Musical section (together, music room) 00:19-00:54
- Interview 1 (Ms Carey, a classteacher from their infant days) 00:55-01:27
- Location-based narratives 2 (together – first bench), 3 (together – second bench), 4 (Aroti – bridge), 5 (Aroti – bridge) 01:28-02:45
- Interview 2 (Ms Black, current classteacher) 02:46-03:30
- Location-based narrative 6 (Katie on chain swing on back field) 03:31-03:52

- Interviews 3a and 3b (Sabina, visiting PhD student, with Aroti and Katie in turn) 03:53-04:50
- Location-based narratives 7 (Katie in the science area), 8 (Aroti talking about playing Hopscotch) 04:51-05:07
- Interview 4 (Mrs Able, their teacher when they were in the nursery) 05:19-06:02
- Location-based narratives 9 (under the shelter, by the mural), 10 (together at the end, recording the names of the three different school halls) 06:13-06:22
- End titles 06:23-06:47

Throughout the production, there was no desire on the part of Aroti and Katie to attempt to follow other groups and subvert the structure or the subject matter with, for example, humorous interludes, parodies and direct media references. The only point at which they deviated from this plan was in an animated sequence where the word "MUSIC" was spelled out on the whiteboard while they played a variety of instruments, but even this break in the rhythm of their video was "serious" play with a strong, adult-directed influence from a visiting PhD student.

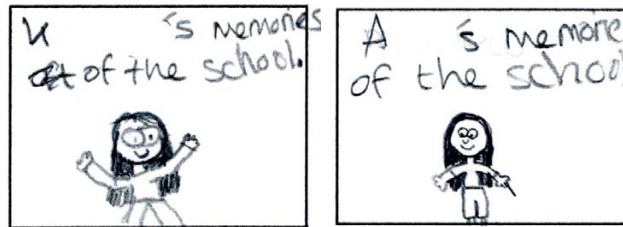
Aroti and Katie's authorial voices are heard in the cumulative effect of the recapitulation of the elements within the production. It has a song-like structure with the two modes, locative-based and interview, answering each other but taking forward the whole production. Thus the passages which take a location and make reference to a habitualised behaviour there ("This is the bench where we always used to come whether we were happy or sad...") are interspersed with parallel reflections made via interviews with four adults concerned with their care and education at different stages in their time at school (nursery, infant, junior and present day). I have labelled their mode of location-based storytelling "locative-narrative", because it has the role within the production of providing a link in the narrative chain of the video bound to specific locations. These chorus-like, locative narratives provide a picture of the habitual behaviour in the spaces of the school, broken by interview and reflections with key adults, in a structure which allows an overarching narrative to form.

EVIDENCE OF PLANNING AND AUTHORIAL INTENT IN THE PAPER ARTEFACTS

Pausing to look back at how the video was planned in order to trace some of the authorial intent, it can be seen that the two girls first constructed a storyboard, deriving it from a mind-map of possibilities. Speaking afterwards, Aroti asserted that the planning, and in particular the storyboard, had been important to the overall success of the piece, even though in some respects the plan had not been stuck to. Initially, for example, there were 12 people to interview, yet the plan allowed them to see, written in front of them, the reasons why this could not be achieved in the time, and why they had to cut it down to four.

Interviews with people in the school setting were highly salient in the storyboard and were largely followed through in the production. For the girls, there was a high level of importance ascribed to telling the story partly through teachers and other interviewees. The planning called for each of the figures to relate aspects of the girl's

past at the school in each of the locations listed. Each of the figures in the frames is drawn as seen by the children. The portraits of the girls themselves are shown virtually identical and interchangeable, arms rising or raised, long hair and big eyes, smiling, with the same captions written inside the frames (the third and fifth frames in the storyboard "Aroti's memories of the school", "Katie's memories of the school" are seen below in Figures 1 and 2).



Figures 1 and 2: Example self-portraits in the storyboard for Katie and Aroti's video

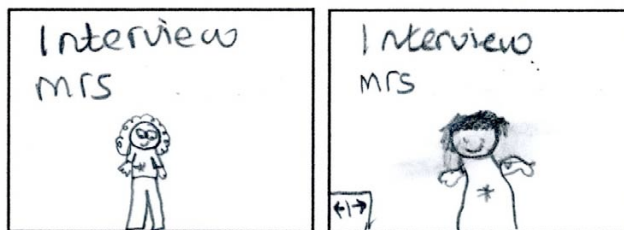
The four teachers are depicted in the storyboard in chronological order as the girls experienced them during their time at the school and end with the headteacher. The first is the nursery teacher, Mrs Able, drawn full face, smiling under a sunny sky (see Figure 3 below) perhaps as she would have appeared to them as small children, the smile critical in their selection of elements to represent for her (cf. Kress, 2004). The next teacher for interview, Ms Carey, is drawn in the same form as Aroti and Katie, smiling, with big eyes and similar hair. This teacher, known for her empathy with the children, sense of humour and for being "child-centred" is shown as more like a child than a teacher (see Figure 4 below).



Figures 3 and 4: Teacher portraits in the storyboard

When she is interviewed, Mrs Able is shown as a match to the design from the storyboard. When Ms Carey is interviewed she is in a noisy classroom, much like the one that Aroti and Katie learned in during their early school life with her (two years at Key Stage One). The choices in production echo the circumstances in which they found themselves in those years. The style of interviewing is relaxed, open and informal, reflecting both the memory of the class and the original production design.

By contrast, the other two teachers, the headteacher and the year 6 teacher are depicted at distance in the storyboard; almost full figure and wearing stars as badges. The badge system as a reward for achievement is distinctive and a marker for authority and the more serious elements of schooling at Key Stage 2. Ms Black and Ms Roberts, although not pictured in an unkind light (they are both smiling), are viewed as a more typically teacherly part of Katie and Aroti's experience of school and therefore distant from the children (see Figures 5 and 6 below).



Figures 5 and 6: Current class-teacher and headteacher portraits in the storyboard

LOCATION AND “HABITUS”

The production visited many quiet areas of the school environment to capture places of importance to the girls. In an early scene, the girls employ a bench which Aroti describes as a place she would visit when “feeling sad or happy”. This personal observation indicates a high degree of ownership of the video-making process, seeing it as something during which they may take the viewer into a confidence. It is also a significant way of expressing feeling in and about a specific school location, which is repeated as a motif (as noted above). The repetition of these key phrases suggests habitual or even ritualised behaviours.

The dialogue in the first scene at the first bench is as follows:

Katie: This is one of our favourite parts of the school because it is very...(looks across at Aroti for an idea of what to say next...Aroti carries on and finishes the sentence)

Aroti:...fun and it's got lots of wildlife...

Katie: It's very quiet. And this bench was given to us by S T who was an old secretary of the school. (A pause follows while the donation plaque is focused on, broken by Aroti taking up the reason for the choice of location...)

Aroti: We always used to sit on this bench when we were sad or happy and we always felt better after a while... (Aroti looks across at Katie and raises her eyebrows, possibly indicating that Katie should add more, possibly that Katie should call the end of the scene).

At the next bench the dialogue again underlines the use of the school environment as a record of past feelings and of ways of being in the world of the school, the girls' “habitus” (Bourdieu, 1986). More than that, they come to be the principal ways in which actions and reactions are established by the subjects in the setting in which they find themselves. For the girls, the internalisation of their performed “otherness”, reliance on each other and lack of connection with the rest of the world of the school is a key element of their production, because it reflects their way of being in the world of the school. In effect they present themselves in this way as a representation of their learned ways of coping and being at school.

The decision to represent places was taken very early on and was reflected in their symbiotic relationship in production. Aroti remembered during a post-production interview that she had several early conversations with Katie when, “she told me which places she liked and I told her”. Even in the latter parts of their production, the teachers' narrative reflection on their part in the school was as important as finding

out about the teachers. A reprise of asking, "What do you remember of us or of your time here with us?" is common throughout.

In the video, with its emphasis on the locative space, the rituals and habitual responses to events and the social position within the class in relation to the children's past in the school, there are echoes of Bourdieu's proposed societal structures and spaces as the "field" in which social actors operate in particular ways in order to maintain a particular status (1986). As a result of prolonged, learned ways of being and living in such spaces, members of a society develop dispositions which generate meaning-making in ordinary ways of being, the things acquired and the means of acquiring them, the ways the life is spoken about and constructed out of the necessity of ordinary, daily existence. Bourdieu (1986) puts it like this:

The habitus is necessity internalised and converted into a disposition that generates meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions; it is a general, transposable disposition which carries out a systematic, universal application – beyond the limits of what has been directly learnt – of the necessity inherent in the learning conditions (p. 170).

For the children in this video, their ways of being at the school are internalised within the structures of the school day, its physical appearance, the arrangement of the buildings, the school curriculum, the regulatory structures, codes of conduct and within the performed and ritualised interrelationships between groups of children and teachers. What is available as a resource for authoring about the self is the way in which these markers play out within the class over a number of years, how they become habitualised and become available for authoring purposes. Indeed, in freely authored video texts made by children exploring their memories and feelings about their place in such a social arena, we would expect to see that revelation of habitus is an aspect of performed, embodied experience played out in many modes, including gesture and speech which are available to them as a resource in digital video inscription.

Because it is a theory of actions on the part of social actors within a field, Bourdieu's conception of habitus provides a useful basis from which to begin to look at self-representational video work by young learners. What is selected by the children in their attempts to make meaning can sometimes contradict traditional narrative forms and editorial continuity, carrying significance in ways shared only by those in the community around the production. This makes some texts difficult to interpret at first sight where the weight of the representative oral or gestural act overwhelms the ability of the producers to tell the story coherently in a manner that will be readily understood by an outsider. Understanding these texts means finding representations of ways of being which are part of the culture of the school, and of the habitus of the pupils there. Some of these markers to do with habitus may not have been revealed before in the school setting. They are possibly not there in traditional curriculum subject-based forms of self-representation. One of the possible outcomes for the research is to propose that in these forms of text is an opportunity to explore the previously unseen, but only if the children themselves can exercise some control of their embodied representation of the spaces in which they work. Other ways into their work are provided by analysing the modes in use and what they may contribute to the piece as a whole.

DIGITAL INSCRIPTION AS “HYPOMNEMATA”

Before analysing the modes of gesture and performance in the piece, it is potentially useful to consider another frame drawn from cultural theory, interpreting the social actions in the authoring of the video at least partly as a media equivalent of the “hypomnemata”. This concept is derived by Michel Foucault from writings from ancient Greece about a system for recording life events as material memory, as an externalising process which gave the writer a repository of the “self” complete with notes and markers on which to draw in times of stress or change (Foucault, 1984). At the time of making the video, the two girls, close friends throughout primary school, were facing an imminent move to secondary education in different schools. The video is their recorded response, a locative-narrative assembly of places and people, of responses and strategies to the challenges of school life on which they can draw as they adjust to new situation.

What becomes significant in this instance is the contribution of the material of the medium to the girls' performed and lived memories as inscribed on the tape. This is not to say that the medium is being employed simply as a diary record, in the same way as the hypomnemata itself was more than a diary. There are no specified dates and times in their production. The aspects of the past which are performed and recalled are actual reinterpretations of their earlier years at the school. They are reinterpreting the past and re-presenting it as a set of habitual and learned behaviours which defined their relationship and their way of being and living at the school, supporting them through difficult times. With their move to secondary school imminent, the digital inscription is used here as a reminder of how to live and how to survive transition by underlining embodied experience. For these girls it is about withdrawing into quiet places, finding someone to empathise with in times of stress. The video production becomes an equivalent of the notes and records of the hypomnemata, intended to be viewed later and referred to not as a record of how specific events unfolded over time so much as how life was lived during those experiences, what happened and how was it dealt with.

The sections where the girls interview the teachers and the other, visiting adult are used as intermissions within the locative narrative, but they retain the mood and the emotional charge of the whole production by focusing on the overriding themes of memory and habitual behaviour. They break up the contemplative personal memory and notemaking of the shots around the school. And yet, in their direction and content, they support the overarching purpose of emphasising the relation of Katie and Aroti to each other and back to school life, with their repeated questioning of the teachers about their memories of the two of them. Here too, where the overall impression is one of artlessness and a rambling style to the video production, closer viewing and knowledge of the setting uncovers a structure to their choice of interview subjects in the finished piece.

The interviews, and the potential for affirmation of their own perceptions of their time at the school, give Aroti and Katie a perspective on their own movement away from the security of their relationship. This is recognised and noted in the final frame of the production. The image that they choose from the library within the video-editing software is of balloons, signifying a party, a celebration. The music which plays is the only non-diegetic sound in their production and the only time they provide a soundtrack piece. Again, the choice of lyrical content, from the boy band, Blue, is in

harmony with the overall authorial direction, memory, reflection and acknowledgement of change... "It's kinda funny, how life can change; Can flip one-eighty in a matter of days..."²

DESIGNS FOR EMBODIED MEMORY: TWO-SHOTS AND GESTURES

We have seen above how two constructs derived from cultural theory, habitus and hypomnemata, may be helpful in interpreting the video. Further analysis focusing on the design and construction of the shots provides an additional framework, derived at least partly from multimodality theory (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001) but incorporating an element of affect and aesthetic response in its consideration of gesture.

The production opens with Aroti and Katie standing at the site of a recently removed tree, which had been there throughout their time at the school. When they speak, their voices are low, talking downwards as they watch their balance on the logs. Their voices are partially drowned by wind noise on the camera microphone and partly by traffic from the road outside, visible in the shot through the railings. The dialogue in the opening is as follows:

Katie: (lost, inaudible words)...places...erm...a big tree was here but then it got knocked down...it's also a really nice place...with big stepping stones (moves off in circuit on the stepping stones around the perimeter and around Aroti).

Aroti: (realising there is a gap and she should contribute, looks away and her speech is drowned in the wind / traffic noise. But becomes audible again as she gestures round the circle with both arms) ...and it's a circle (see figure 7 below)...



Figure 7: Example two-shot in the opening sequence of Katie and Aroti's video

Enclosing and encircling the mode of gesture is used, alongside the framing of the circle where the tree used to be, to underline the togetherness of Aroti and Katie and to suggest their separation from the rest of the life of the playground. The choice of a recently removed fixture of school life in the opening scene is recapitulated in the penultimate scene.

² The lyrics quoted are from the title song from the *One Love* album by the boy band Blue released on Virgin Records, 2002



Figure 8: Closing scene of Aroti and Katie's video

The last scene with the girls in it is a sequence where they move around the site and record the names and location of the school halls (see Figure 8 above). At the time the production was being filmed, major changes were being made to the school. Previously, and throughout their time at the school, the buildings were in three disconnected school halls. During the video production, building work had begun to join them together physically to make one complete structure. Aroti and Katie were the only two children in the overall project to make specific use and mention of the fabric of the building in this way. The production opens and closes with images of change and upheaval which are salient in terms of the way in which they wish to represent themselves and the school before they too move on and change. The locative narratives mirror their own state of change, the imminent movement from one school to another and the growing up which that implies.

The visual construction of the shots emphasises the changing landscape but it also emphasises their embodied performance within it. The repeated form is the two-shot or the mid-shot in a specific location around the school. Couples, usually Aroti and Katie but sometimes one or other of them with an interview subject, dominate the shot list. The camerawork and staging emphasises the two of them within the landscape so that what is articulated in their composition is their representation of "two-ness" and their own interdependence, even symbiosis. There are almost no other shots of anyone else in the whole production and that is unique within the videos made for either project in this study. The mise-en-scene of the production is of a unit of two narrating or presenting to camera (see Figures 9-14 below).



Figures 9-14: A set of example two-shots in Katie and Aroti's video

These structures can be read using tools of visual semiotics (after Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006); for example this approach is useful in identifying framing devices such as the circles and the enclosed nature of the visual (within the system of “two-ness” identified above). However, this is not all that the medium affords the girls, in the same way as it is not the only analytical frame which can be applied to the work. Patterns of movement of gesture and of speech, recapitulated throughout the girls' production underline their desire to perform and record their way of being in the school. On a number of occasions the girls gesture to each other or perform in some way within a closed system of their own making. As they label each of the school halls towards the end of the video, they frame the name of each hall between the two of them and gesture across the sign towards each other (see Figure 15 below).



Figure 15: Closing gestures between Aroti and Katie

When Aroti performs the hopscotch scene, she gestures back at Katie behind the camera with open arms (see Figure 16 below).



Figure 16: Aroti's gesture back to the camera

Finally, again towards the end, standing under the shelter near the open space at the back of the school, the open armed gesture returns with Aroti half turning towards Katie (see Figure 17 below).



Figure 17: Aroti and Katie in the shelter

The work of Merleau-Ponty is important here, alongside the more usual references to multimodality, in accounting for the performed aspect of living and being as it relates to learning (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Engeström, Miettinen, & Punamäki 1999;

Reynolds, 2005); in particular the idea that learning in an environment and a community is through embodied action and learned responsiveness to a given situation. The revelation of the layers of these meaning-making states in embodied performance is one of the distinctive features of moving image work, as we will see in other productions in the dataset.

For the girls in this production it becomes a matter of record that they place themselves in the various locations, using similar gestures and the same form of words over and over again in the same performance – locating themselves in places of importance in recalling and re-performing their habitualised experience of coping with living and being in the school community, as the following exchange illustrates:

Katie: This is one of our favourite bits because...well, whenever I was upset Aroti used to take me to this bench and cheer me up always...

Aroti: And...Although this area is quite new but we had lots of good times and bad times here

Katie: It's also very good and nice and shady for the summer...when it's very, very hot...

The location affords them the opportunity to be together and to look after each other in moments of stress and difficulty in other relationships at the school. The “whenever” suggests that it was a regular occurrence, and further examples of this are outlined below. It is as important for Katie and Aroti to record this aspect of their lived experience at the school as it is for them to interview and remember key adults. This is because their interdependence is a highly salient feature of their life and times at school A.

The linguistic constructions which the girls use give a corollary with the visual and gestural “two-ness” and recalled performance of being with each outlined above. The passages below highlight words which suggest this repetition and habitualised behaviour, such as “whenever”, “always” “used to” and so on as italicised below:

Katie: This is one of our favourite bits because...well, *whenever* I was upset, Aroti used to take me to this bench and cheer me up *always*...

Aroti: And...although this area is quite new but we had lots of good times and bad times here.

Katie: This is one of our favourite parts of the school because it is very...

Aroti: We *always used to* sit on this bench when we were sad or happy and we always felt better after a while...

As stated above, there are no recorded interviews or interactions with fellow pupils at any time in this video (other than a very brief transition after one of the interviews). The video is constructed as a way of recording repeated and habitualised behaviour of school life at the same time as celebrating their shared experience and mutual dependence on each other. The cumulative effect is one of intense memory-making through the locative-narrative.



Figures 18-20: Place and memory in Katie and Aroti's video

This form of narrative is most salient in Katie and Aroti's production, where they chose to put themselves into the frame in a variety of locations, talking to camera, quietly and quickly, making an effort to record secret places around the school which were of special significance to them (see Figures 18-20 above). Space was marked out around them by gesture and by movement employed as a measure of performed, embodied identity. Furthermore, they existed in the production as a unit of two people in the space, just as they had always remembered and experienced it.

Katie and Aroti's video amplified the potential for personal inscription in digital media of a kind which is neither typically parodic, anarchic nor dazzling in its techniques and execution. What they achieved, using their own form of personal digital inscription, rather than a well-assembled and complex set of quotations from media sources, was to make a collage of quotations from their own lives and experience of living them. And yet, the surface features of the production were much more of an enclosed system, not available fully to the outside world.

During post-production interview, the focus on editing as a key component of the design process was evident even as the inherent difficulties of getting this right became a limiting factor on what could be achieved, with the girls having to significantly reduce the running time of the finished piece. They acknowledged frustration and difficulty editing onscreen, working at what Burn and Parker describe as the "multimodal mixing desk" (2003) and they required perseverance in producing a completed version of their performed selves. This notion of the work involved in the multimodal mixing of resources onscreen is important because it positions editing as an active process in authorship, not simply the final part of moving image production which merely acts as an assembly point for previously organised resources. It becomes a process with its own organising principles, a place wherein a key set of authoring decisions are not only taken but also enacted.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS: ACTIVE SELF-CURATORSHIP AS A LITERACY PRACTICE IN THE MEDIUM OF DIGITAL VIDEO

For Katie and Aroti, digital video production meant storying embodied action through movement, framing, direction and selection which could subsequently become encoded and recorded. In this way the video itself would be able to take its place in the set of quotable media assets of their own lives in the future, alongside later digital images, web spaces, sound recordings, clips on phones and so on. In turn this video could form part of the curatorship of their life experience – a permanent, moving-image recording at a moment in time, shaped and composed by the authors themselves, whose meanings were nonetheless only fully accessible by those able to

read the different elements and resources as a meaning-making, self-representational system.

In introducing a notion of curatorship as a useful metaphor for the act of making this kind of video, I am specifically locating this as a “literacy practice” (cf. Street, 1995) and not as an issue in the management of personal archives, which has been the subject of other recent studies (Williams, Leighton, & Rowlands, 2009, for example). In the conception presented here, the social relations are a determining factor in the literacy practices within a group; to be literate in this sense is to negotiate cultural and social identity (cf Buckingham, 1993). A further related overlap is in the appropriation and re-mixing of the material of life from which narrative is constructed. From Bauman (2004), in discussing identity, comes the notion that the person constructing their personal story is a *bricoleur*, conjuring a narrative “from the material at hand” and from Bruner (1990) the idea that there is a transactional, connected nature to construction of identity; both of these conceptions are important in the context of digital video production, as we have seen, with its spaces for organising multimodal assets and re-presenting them for interpretation by a community of viewers.

Bruner's notion of interconnectedness through the exchanges of shared signs and symbols within the culture is, as noted above, aligned to the concept of “memes” as described by, for example, Lankshear and Knobel in *New Literacies: Everyday practices and classroom learning* (2006, p. 128). These changing conceptions of literacy find an echo and an overlap in the concept of intertextuality, with assets and modes in narrative, layered and organised in the editing space onscreen and provisionally available for re-organisation and exhibition at any point in the “multimodal mixing desk” mentioned above (Burn & Parker, 2003). In each of the discussions of cultural theory outlined in preceding sections, alluding either to “habitus” or “hypomnemata”, aspects of collection, inscription and personal trace was involved which can be characterised as an active form of self-curatorship.

Katie and Aroti's production is an intensely realised piece in terms of recording ways of being in specific spaces, a form of composing in new media which, as noted previously, provided evidence of the overarching context of Bourdieu's concept of “habitus” (1986). In this way, in this short form of autobiographical video, the use of place as a location, and a trigger, for memory is an archetypal response to the task of storying the self in new media. Foucault's “*Hypomnemata*” (1984) was suggested as a further metaphor for the digital inscription in videos made by the children. The choices of framing themselves were significant, repeatedly in two-shots, as well as the gestural mode identified above as a way of performing and preserving aspects of their identity and relationship as a matter of record.

What appears to be distinctive about production in this form, in the cultural and literacy practice of recorded memory-making, is the aspect of combination, re-combination and re-presentation of the raw materials of everyday life. The moving image has always been the medium in which these possibilities can be explored and filmmakers have explored them through more than a century; with new media the difference is the accessibility and usability of the tools, the “multimodal mixing desk” (Burn & Parker, 2003) and the potential to publish and exhibit. In short, Katie and Aroti's video represents an example of the ways in which the distribution and exhibition of digital inscriptions by younger and younger learners is coming to

represent a literacy practice in itself; this is closer to curatorship than straightforward composition and is worthy of consideration as a starting point for media literacy research and practice from the earliest ages.

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