Media on the Move: a Research Perspective

Kirsten Drotner
Centre for Child and Youth Media Studies
University of Southern Denmark
Dominant trends in media culture

- Media convergence
- Media mobility

Increasing complexity of communication
Media convergence and the mobile phone
Research development

- Focus on single media -> focus on media milieus
- Focus on media as technology -> focus on media as content/media as communication
- Focus on production or provider -> focus on users
What should be our research approach?

A complex media development must be matched by a complex research approach

A joint research approach

Social perspective
uses and practices
interaction

Media perspective
content, meaning-making
interactivity
Empirical trends: social perspective

- Access does not equal use
  (cp. Livingstone & Bovill, eds. 2001)

- Reconfiguring use in public and private spheres
  (cp. Habermas, Goffman)

- Reconfiguring boundaries of public and private media uses irrespectice of spheres

↓

Private media uses discourses on intimacy

Public media uses discourses on participation and power
Social perspective: Discourses on intimacy

Gendering of discourses

Boys and young men: sexualised discourses directed at opposite sex

Girls and young women: desexualised discourses directed at same sex
Social perspective: discourses on participation and power

- Sports clubs and after-school care:
  adults circulate official messages vs. children circulate illicit images and irreverent rumours

- Schools:
  official bans vs actual inclusion both by adults and pupils
Empirical trends: media perspective

- Relevance of substance central to interest (cp. Livingstone & Bovill, eds. 2001)
- Production of signs central to meaning making (graphics, text, sound - and mixtures of these)
- Interactivity is expressive ”sign play”
- Possibilities of personalised expressions as well as collective communication

vs. public discourse on disintegrating literacies because of sms
vs. public discourses on individualised media culture
Mobile futures?

- In the convergence cycle, for the user mobile phone communication resembles internet communication more than fixed phone services:
  - multiple-sense communication
  - both synchronous and asynchronous communication
  - playful interactivities
  - personal as well as collective interaction

convergent interactivities on the move
Implications for future research

- Convergent media and ICT research
- Multiple theoretical perspectives
- Processual methodologies