VISUAL FRICTIONS

Sensory experiences of digital photo-sharing—“mundane frictions” and emerging learning strategies

Vaike Fors*
School of Education, Humanities, and Social Sciences, Halmstad University, Sweden

Abstract
Digital technologies are increasingly ubiquitous in everyday life forming part of the way we live and experience the world. This article will specifically scrutinise how mobile phone cameras, digital photographing and the use of web-based photo-sharing sites and communities become part of the meaning-making practices through which the everyday is lived and understood. In doing so, I advance the concept of “mundane friction” through which to discuss the experience, meaning-making and pedagogy generated through operating screen-based technologies. Indeed, media participates in everyday worlds beyond its role as a provider of content and for communication. The question that will be addressed here is how this media presence can be understood from an embodied and sensory perspective, and is based in a study of sensory aspects of teenagers use of web-based photo-diaries. Further, this discussion leads to questions of how an appreciation of digital visuality as more than representational acknowledges the meaning of mundane friction caused by habitually touching, rubbing, clicking, pinching through media technologies as part of the sensory emplacement process that establish people as situated learners. In turn, problematising this tangible friction as pivotal for understanding digital visuality gives reason to argue for research methods that acknowledge digital visual material as more-than-visual and theory that moves toward the unspoken, tacit and sensory elements of learning in everyday practices. Thus, the aim of this article is to elaborate on the embodied, the methodological and the pedagogical dimensions of “mundane friction” in meaning-making activities, and its pedagogical implications.

*Correspondence to: Vaike Fors, School of Education, Humanities, and Social Sciences, Halmstad University, Box 823, SE-301 18 Halmstad, Sweden. Email: vaike.fors@hh.se

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This article will advance the concept of “mundane friction” through which to discuss the experience, meaning-making and pedagogy generated through operating touchscreens and computer screens. The presented empirical examples originate from ethnographic work together with seven teenagers who showed us around on their favourite website, a web-based photo-diary. These examples are part of a larger study of how teenagers’ use of image-based social networking sites becomes part of how teenagers learn and make sense in their everyday life, and the implications for this in museums. In doing so, this article will elaborate on how a sensory approach to touchscreens can contribute to the study of digital visuality. Visuality, in its own term, derives from Hal Fosters distinction between vision and visuality, and denotes the aspects of the visual that is socially and culturally constructed in various ways: “how we see, how we are able, allowed, or made to see, and how we see this seeing and the unseeing therein.” Through a sensory approach, this article will push the notion of visuality one step further, and not only discuss how the visual is socially constructed but also how visuality is in itself culturally constructed as distinctive from and in competition with other senses. Indeed, as media scholars like Elizabeth Edwards and Laura U Marks has convincingly suggested, vision is not purely visual, but a multisensory embodied experience, closely linked to touch and haptic perception. As Marks points out, in what she calls haptic visuality (as opposed to optical visuality), “the eyes themselves function as organs of touch” which leads to that “the viewer’s body is more obviously involved in the process of seeing than in the case with optical visuality.” Marks is concerned with what the focus on the optical brings with it in terms of how we might lose contact with the materiality of images; the tacit, sensory and embodied relationships between the viewer and the image. In line with this argument, but with an ethnographic approach that deviates from Marks’ focus on spectatorship of moving images, I will here argue that digital visuality is inherently embodied since the digital invites people to touch, stroke, pinch, push, click touchscreens and other devices in daily routines and habits of taking, sharing and showing photos with camera phones. Even though large software and smartphone companies work hard and innovatively with creating “smooth” human–machine interfaces, there is an obvious, however not articulated, physical friction caused between the fingers/hands and the hardware in the daily use of these technologies. This daily and mundane friction between the hand/s and technologies plays a tangible role in the everyday learning strategies that develop through frequent use of digital visual media. Thus, “mundane frictions” is here used as a concept that might help us to move beyond simplified understandings of digital media practices as mainly actions of vision.

The reason for doing so is not only to, on a methodological level, problematise digital visuality through a multisensory perspective, but also to discuss implications on a pedagogical level. It seems to be clear that the conditions for learning have changed through the emergence of ubiquitous digital media technologies. This insight has had major implications in educational settings on all levels, in the way educators try to adapt the learning situation accordingly with what affordances these technologies might be considered to offer. Research in this area is often occupied with understanding the technological interface between the user and digital educational tools and what the hardware and software enables from a didactic point of view. What is scarcely examined is how use of media technologies has an impact on people’s everyday learning strategies, strategies that they bring with them into different, both informal and institutional, learning contexts. Ellsworth suggests that investigations in this neglected field actually can move learning theory further to acknowledge the embodied experience of change and motion. These routes to knowing might be hard to articulate since peoples life-world based learning resources cannot be treated as content; it consists of knowing that is “more-than-representational.” This implies that it is a
field within pedagogical studies in need of further development. How can a multisensory approach to digital media studies deepen our understandings of how media is part of our experiential ways of making sense of everyday life? This question will be elaborated on both a theoretical and pedagogical level in this article; however, the methodological implications of a multisensory approach toward studies of the use of digital media will be discussed first.

SENSORY METHODOLOGIES

This article draws on an ethnographic study undertaken with a group of teenagers about their learning habits that emerged through their everyday use of digital media, and the pedagogical implications of this for museums. Following Gillian Rose’s model of different sites and modalities for interpreting visual materials, this research focused on the social modalities of why and how the web-based visual materials were produced and how they were interpreted when viewed, thus leaving the compositional and technological modalities of the digital media aside. Furthermore, the aim was to investigate the ways in which teenagers are using digital photography in relation to the materialities of their environments alongside their use of web platforms and computing devices. Visual ethnographic methods were used to pay attention to the relationship between online and offline practices and the pedagogical implications of these practices in informal learning settings.

The study was exploratory in its design and probed teenagers’ contemporary use of image-based digital media as emergent learning resources. The chosen research participants were specifically targeted as accustomed users of web-based media. All of them studied within a media-oriented program in a Swedish high school. This article draws on one specific part of the study in which the research participants showed me around on their favourite websites. These “computer-tours” showed that their favourite social media web page at the time was Bilddagboken.se (a web-based photo-diary). Bilddagboken.se was then, according to the web site, one of the largest Swedish image-based social network sites. By the time of the study, it was primarily used by teenagers, and the interface allowed the user to upload images in a calendar and get comments from friends (see Picture 1).

The same year Bilddagboken.se was developed into Dayviews.com, it included 250,827,087 images and 100,000–500,000 pictures were uploaded everyday. Through interviews with teenage users, Lundmark and Normark noticed that the images were uploaded with a specific purpose; to be interesting for a broader group of friends, which makes the web page a typical site for contemporary digital self-representation (see Picture 2).

The computer-tours with the participants were designed with inspiration from visual research that aims at using the camera as a tool for the researcher to learn to see and perceive as others do, in a directed way. By asking the teenagers to guide me through their favourite sites and to describe their practices both verbally and through embodied performance, as a researcher I got the opportunity to learn more about how to both scroll, click and browse through the websites, and how and what to pay attention to in the web content. Instead of using an external video camera, the computer-tours with the research participants were recorded through the software “Screenflow.” Screenflow records not only show what happens in front of the computer by using the computer camera and microphone, but also record what happens on the screen itself. This procedure provided more detailed information on how the cursor moved on the screen in relation to what the research participants showed and talked about, than could be assessed by filming with an external video camera. In turn, this detailed information provided opportunities for me to go back into the material and...
re-call what happened and what the research participant talked about in terms of what was worth paying attention to in the showed images, and how I should pay attention to these details. That is, how the browsing, pointing and looking through the photo-diary became part of the description of what the diary meant to them and the embodied experiences of moving through it.

Subsequently, a specific research interest laid in analysing how visual experience is part of the multisensory and material process of moving through the digital, paying attention to “the ways the body is engaged in imagining and remembering” the localities and persons that Internet content represent and thereby “move beyond the notion of ‘looking at’ images on a screen.” Thus, the research material was analysed in ways that made it possible to explore the theoretical and methodological implications of approaching “audio–visual” media not only through the visual, but also as an embodied practice and elaborating on the relation between the digital images and the sensory practices in which they were embedded.

In order to make it possible to re-call what happened in particular sequences of the computer-tours from an embodied and multisensory perspective, these sequences were transcribed into a similar format as is used in comics. Inspired by Scott McCloud’s discussions about how comics are visual media that tries to embrace all the senses within it, the comic-book-like transcription below is organised to show both what happened on the screen, what the research participant focused on, what s/he said while this happened and how the mouse and cursor moved during this episode. Altogether, this information creates a translation of the situation into words and images that readers and researchers can empathise with. As McCloud argues, as much as there is something to see in the panels, there are also things to imagine between the panels that call all the senses into action. This imaginative dimension of the in-betweeness of images organised in a series of panels resembles the way the teenagers used Bilddagboken.se to upload snapshots from their everyday life, both in series of three to four photos or as single photos. As shown in the example below, the imaginative, non-representational aspect of the photo-diary was crucial in understanding the meaning of it from the teenager’s point of view. The following sequence is taken from a computer-tour with Frida, one of the research participants.

The episode above shows how media practices that involved posting photo entries on the web were deeply embedded in these teenagers routines and habits, documenting what Villi calls “visual chit-chat—the capturing and sharing of fleeting feelings, moods, and mundane moments of the everyday and commonplace.” The experience of the
The results showed among other things that frequent use of Bilddagboken.se by taking uploading and sharing digital photographs incorporates learning to perceive through a sensorium that is characterised by giving form to experiences and places through a combination of vision, touch, motion and imagination, unifying rather than disassociating the senses through calling imagination into action. In the next section, a theoretical framework that helps us to understand media use from a sensory and embodied perspective will be clarified.

**MEDIA AND THE SENSES**

In this article, digital visuality is approached through the senses. This “sensory turn” is part of an emerging body of literature across humanities and social sciences that focus on sensory perception, and its role in the process through which people experience and make their everyday environments. The anthropologist Tim Ingold, whose mission is to bring together social/cultural and biological understandings of how people perceive the environment into one coherent approach, developed a theory of perception mainly based on the writings of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and James Gibson. In his approach, Ingold insisted on looking at perception as something other than a mechanism that provides the mind with raw material of experience through the body’s sensorial channels, that will be organised into an internal model of the world inside the brain. Instead, Ingold argues that perception as an achievement “of the organism as a whole in its environment, and is tantamount to the organism’s own exploratory movement through the world. If mind is anywhere then, it is not ‘inside the head’ rather than ‘out there’ in the world. To the contrary, it is immanent in the network of sensory pathways that are set up by virtue of the perceiver’s immersion in his or her environment.”

This way of reasoning turns the analytical attention toward how we perceive the world not as a ready-made surface to appropriate or internalise, but as emerging as we move through it. It also questions the notion of the perceptual system as constituted of five sensory channels that register different kinds of input from the environment in differentiated ways. On the contrary, Ingold argues that photo-entry came through the computer-tours structured around aspects of the situations that were not visible in the photos, but still very concretely articulated through an interplay between what was seen, said, anticipated, imagined and touched (on the mouse and screen). By clicking the mouse and moving the cursor over the pictures, these invisible, tacit and embodied aspects came to be articulated and part of creating place. Thus, the results showed among other things that frequent use of Bilddagboken.se by taking uploading and sharing digital photographs incorporates learning to perceive through a sensorium that is characterised by giving form to experiences and places through a combination of vision, touch, motion and imagination, unifying rather than disassociating the senses through calling imagination into action. In the next section, a theoretical framework that helps us to understand media use from a sensory and embodied perspective will be clarified.
everything we perceive is subsumed under a total system of bodily orientation, thus implying that “looking, listening and touching, therefore, are not separate activities, they are just different facets of the same activity: that of the whole organism in its environment.”

From this perspective, it becomes evident that the Western categories of sight, sound, touch and smell are not biologically given sensorial channels that register differentiated sensory data, but are culturally constructed sensory categories that we use when we try to explain what we experience both in everyday life as well as when we, as researchers, discuss research methods and findings. It also implies that people learn how to use and describe their senses, rather than merely deploying the natural capabilities of the body. Gibson suggests that key to such understandings of everyday environments is about perception and an “education of attention.”

Building on Gibson’s theories of the interrelatedness between the organism and its environment, Ingold argues that “one learns to perceive in the manner appropriate to a culture—by hands-on training in everyday tasks whose successful fulfilments requires a practical ability to notice and to respond fluently to salient aspects of the environment.” Even though Gibson’s and Ingold’s scholarship doesn’t concern media studies in particular, this body of work becomes useful in research that takes on a sensory approach to digital media. That is particularly evident in studies that focus on how new ways of touching, looking and moving with digital media raise questions of the sensorality of embodied engagements with media, how it feels to engage physically with these technologies and how media is part of a fuller sensory emplaced experience of being part of an environment.

Previous approaches to media analysis of the relationships between media and its users have tended to be concerned with the content of media messages and how it is interpreted and received by its audiences. Tony Bennett indicates that these tendencies also include a view of the audiences as “essentially disembodied,” as if relations to media take place without eyes, ears and fingers being particularly involved. In contrast, media scholars like Shaun Moores prescribe media theory that considers media as practice, or more specifically, part of practice. It is media theory that appreciates media use as place-constituting activity, among “the myriad ways subjects inhabit the world before they represent that world to themselves and others,” and how media becomes part of people’s ways of exploring and continually contextualising the material environment through their movements and multisensory experiences. Pink calls our attention to how the uses of Internet websites have multisensory implications. Even though you could think of screen- and web-based media as mainly a visual sensation, Pink argues that an understanding of place as a relationality in which the local and global is mutually constituted, then we could be invited to “understand the Internet as a field of potential forms of relatedness” and that different elements of the Internet “always have the potential to be interwoven into particular intensities of place that also involve, interactivity, material localities, and technologies.” Indeed, with today’s mobile technologies, the use of the Internet is not only circumscribed to gazing into a domestic computer monitor, but a whole bodily orientation. Subsequently, web pages, applications and other platforms we might engage with online “are not simply bounded visual landscapes that can be sensed as virtual places. Rather they are experienced inevitable as part of places that straddle the different environments we engage in and perceive multi-sensorially and memorially.” This approach is part of a trajectory within so-called “non-media-centric media studies” that focus on the embodied and emplaced dimensions of media that have grown in reaction to more semiotic, representational and culturalist research traditions within the field.

**EMBODIED AND NON-MEDIA CENTRIC APPROACHES TO MEDIA STUDIES**

Richardsson argues that the shift from analogue to digital technologies in the past 50 years has changed how we relate to and make meaning of the world. Some media scholars, like Laura Marks, are concerned with if this tendency marks a shift away from the experiential embodied ways of knowing.

I worry that the information age is making us very good as symbolization, at the expense of bringing us into contact with that which we do not know and for which we have no categories. Surfing most Web sites, or playing most video games confirms our ability to
executing certain tasks but I am not sure how it
opens us to the unknown—except perhaps
for those moments when, waiting for a
download, we notice the shape of our finger-
nails for the first time.28

In the same vein, Moores instead insists on
regarding media as inherently embodied and argue
for a joint consideration of physical and media
environments as lived spaces,29 Richardsson makes
a similar argument when she describes the develop-
ment of mobile media devices and wearable
screens (like smart phones) as a development
that only further disrupts distinctions between
place and space, actual and virtual environment.30
Thus, media scholars like Moores, Richardsson
and Marks urge for an appreciation of the materi-
ality of media practices that “pulls us away from
a symbolic understanding and toward a shared
physical existence.”31 For example, Moores draws
our attention to embodied parts of media practices,
like the use of keyboards and manoeuvring of a
mouse device, and how this “direct link between
bodily know-how and technologically mediated
mobility leads me to doubt any grand claims about
the disembodied character of online existence,
and to insist that issues of embodiment should be
much more central to media theory and research
they currently are.”32 As Nick Crossley points out,
the use of media technologies in everyday life offers
a lot of opportunities to develop embodied forms
of knowledge. He discusses for example how his
own experience of using computer keyboards has
made him experience a “bodily know-how” that
made him know how to type without being able to
give a reflective account of the keyboard layout.
This “pre-reflective” knowledge is placed in his
hands relation to the keyboard in a way that if he
had to say where the keys were “I have to imagine
that I am typing and watch where my fingers head
for.”33 Indeed, everyday use of media participates
in the mundane ways people make sense of the
world far beyond its role as a provider of content
and for communication. Obviously, the embodied
dimensions of media practices are very much
part of the “education of attention” suggested by
Gibson34; however, further research is needed.
To understand the role of media today in relation
to other aspects of everyday life (like learning) the
media scholars mentioned above call for a “non-
media centric” approach to media studies where
social practice is the primary generative phenom-

enon, and where media use is appreciated as an
embodied and emplaced part of practice em-
bedded in habitual, pre-reflective, experiential
ways of knowing the material environment. In the
next section, the empirical material presented
above will be approached from such a perspective,
in order to scrutinise digital visuality from a multi-
sensory perspective.

MULTISENSORY DIMENSIONS OF
DIGITAL VISUALITY

Following the first example (shown in Picture 3),
the next example will further elaborate on how a
multisensory approach gives reason to understand
digital visuality as not only a visual endeavour,
but also incorporating touch and other sensory
imaginations. In the following example, the re-
search participant Sanne shows a sequence from
her photo-diary that tells about a visit to a so-called
“street race,” an illegal car racing event that usually
happens at night in abandoned industrial areas.
She excitedly told about the different activities and
showed a large amount of photos that were mostly
blurred and hard to understand without explana-
tions. A recurring description was that she wasn’t
interested in showing specific things when posting
the photos; instead the main feature of the pictures
was to convey the “feeling” Sanne had experienced
when participating in this event. She wanted to
show these photos when asked to show any entry
in her photo-diary that she often went back to
when she browsed through the web page. First she
clicked on the date of the street race and got to a
page where there were rows of blurred photos.
She described that “most of the pictures are dark,
well here [pointing with the cursor on two com-
pletely black photos] it is because I forgot to move
my finger from the flash . . . however they mean a lot!”
[She moves on clicking and scrolling down in the
feed until she reaches a bit lighter, but still blurred,
photo that makes her smile]. Pointing at the photo
with her index finger, she said: “Here also you see
a lot of people it is a bad photo, but you see the car
go and you understand the feeling.” After saying
this, she moved the cursor back and forth over
the picture at a fast pace (see Picture 4 below).
She sits and looks at the picture and clicks on it so
it becomes larger and talks about how she wants
it there as a memory, and as an opportunity to
relive that moment and distribute the feeling to her

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friends by posting it in her diary. The reason is that “this was the first time I was on a street race and everyone was all excited and the adrenaline was on 220. It was awesome!” We continued discussing how that feeling could be captured through a photo and she showed a dark photo with traces of white clouds. The clouds were traces of smoke from when the cars made “burnouts” and Sanne wanted to describe through her photo “that smoky feeling.” Again, Sanne used both the mouse and cursor, and also by touching the screen directly with her fingers, to give form to the experience the photos evoked when she scrolled through her feed.

The multisensory approach deployed in the analysis made it possible to understand these teenagers’ sensory enskillement and incorporated routes to knowing as characterised by a common ground of looking, touching, sensory imaginations and movement through the Internet. The touching was concretely performed, through the tapping of the hand over the keyboard and on the mouse (and handling the mobile phone camera in the situation that was photographed), and by the way it was embedded in the participants demonstrations of what the photo-diary tacitly and experientially consisted of and what you could do with it. Throughout the video-tours, the teenagers were asked both to verbally describe and show through embodied performance what and how to pay attention to the website content. This ethnographic approach provided opportunities for us as researchers to learn to experience the image-based web site the way they did, a route to knowing that was permeated by the physical experience of touch in combination with imaginations of fleeting and ephemeral place-events.

DIGITAL VISUALITY—A MATTER OF TOUCH

This analysis of the multisensoriality of Bilddagboken.se highlighted touch, together with vision, as being a crucial component of the studied sensory emplaced learning process. Touching is so obvious a condition for participation in social network sites that it is easily over-looked. However, as mentioned above, within media studies there is a recent turn toward the materialities of media use, focusing on issues of embodiment and emplacement,35 and haptic visuality.36 Vision has a long tradition of being connected with touch; well-known philosophers who have dealt with this issue are among others Descartes and later on Merleau-Ponty. More recent discussions about how touch is related to visuality include Elisabeth Edwards’ work on photography. Edwards discusses how photographs are closely connected to touch since they have from its earliest days demanded physical engagement—“photo-objects exist in relationship to the human body, making photographs as objects intrinsically active in the way they are handled, touched, caressed.”37

The following example brings to the fore how the sense of touch is deployed in the digital setting, not only as part of a body-image relationship, but also in the creation and re-enactment of place. The example emanates from the computer-tour with Sanne and shows a sequence in which Sanne introduces how she would capture the places she is moving through during a day in her photo-diary. The speech bubble stretches over a couple of photos, which indicates the pace at which Sanne moved through her photos. She browsed swiftly through the first three photos and then stopped at the fourth photo that showed her friends sitting on a train. When looking at the fifth photo, she started to click and zoom while discussing this photo and what it meant to her. Her use of the click-and-zoom function followed her way of reasoning, a process that also could be understood the other way around. Both the handling of the computer and the line of thoughts she articulated were coordinated so that one and the other feed.

Picture 4. One example of how touch and vision was used by the research participant to emplace the image into the interview context and give form to the feelings the photos evoked in her, feelings she wanted to share. Through pointing on the photo with the cursor in different ways, unarticulated and tacit aspects of the captured situation unfolded and called more-than-visual senses into action.
into a whole of re-creating the place in which these photos were part of and at the same time creating the meaning of place.

In Picture 4 in the previous section, the research participant demonstrates the photograph by using the computer mouse in an attempt to invoke the feeling of being there and experience the cars moving by at a fast pace; the smell, sound and heat from the engines, all the people watching and so on. In Picture 5, above the routinely performed clicking and double-clicking of the mouse both provided the narrative with a rhythm and pace, and at the same time changed the perspective of the image by sometimes zooming in and out. These are part of many examples that showed how the touching of the keyboard, computer mouse and touchscreens occurred frequently when participants were discussing the images in the photodiary. According to Ingold’s ideas of perception as something that is learned “in a manner appropriate to a culture—by hands-on training in everyday tasks,” digital visuality implies—according to these examples—to educate the attention through touch. It also suggests that the feeling of touching is part of the articulation and orientation of attention toward tacit and embodied experiences, creating place as moving through the feed of photos in different places and from different positions. These findings will be elaborated on in the following section, and the use of “touch” as a sensory category that describes the experience of digital photos will be problematised.

**MUNDANE FRICTIONS: RE-THINKING TOUCH/VISION**

As shown in the empirical examples described above, the use of an image-based social network site as Bilddagboken.se affords a lot of physically handling of technological devices (what is here called “mundane frictions”) both when taking snapshots of fleeting moments, and when uploading and later viewing, browsing and commenting on the snapshots on the website. In this study, the teenagers also demonstrated the ways the different images on the website should be viewed and understood which in itself included some extra pointing and scrolling that they probably would not be doing when looking through the website alone. In this way, they used the technology at hand to articulate and re-enact what they usually do not need to say and do when participating in their own communities, thus creating a rich context for investigating what is meaningful to the people who participate in youth cultures that are otherwise inaccessible and invisible for studying for researchers of another generation or community. Even though the exploratory design of this study concludes that it is hard to claim any general knowledge about emerging youth cultures in relation to image-based social network sites, the results provide insights into how digital visuality can be understood from an embodied and multisensory perspective. Bilddagboken.se was not culturally specific in relation to Swedish culture, but instead featured commonly used tools and interfaces for uploading images in social media and has now continued to develop in an international format (dayviews.com). Therefore, it might not be far-fetched to think about the findings as transferable to other image-based social networks as well.
With the empirical findings presented in previous sections in mind, one could question the existence of pure “visual media.” Indeed, there has been a scholarly move away from visual media for some time. One example is Mitchell’s article with the title “There are no Visual Media” in which he argues that “all media are mixed media.” With reference to Oliver Sacks, Mitchell suggests that there is no pure visual perception since “natural vision is braiding and nesting of the optical and the tactile.” The problem here, as pinpointed by Pink, is that “braiding” can only be possible if we think of the senses as differentiated channels. However, if we take the argument that the sensory categories are themselves culturally constructs seriously, these categories cannot be mapped directly onto processes of human perception. Perception does not necessarily happen in categories at all. As Pink points out, we do not experience through these categories themselves, but when we talk about our sensory experiences, both in everyday life or as researchers, we might use these categories as a way of communicating. This perspective on the senses calls for a reflexive awareness of what analytical categories we use and what they mean in relation to the experiential realities we want to describe.

It is obvious that what the research participants in the examples above actually did, here analysed as touching, is that they move their hands and fingers habitually and routinely when stroking, pointing, clicking, pinching, tapping the different media technologies with the purpose of taking and publishing photos, write comments, browse through the images, “relive certain happenings,” explaining invisible and embodied feelings and content. However, from a multisensory perspective, the participants might not conceive this dexterity as a matter of touch/vision/imagination at all, even though they might use these categories if they were asked what they were doing with their bodies in front of the computer. These examples show the importance of awareness that touch in this sense is established analytically as a constructed category interrelated with vision and sensory imaginations. Therefore, it can’t be reduced to stand for anything by itself, but has always been understood in relation to the experience it is said to represent. Subsequently, suggesting “mundane frictions” as a multisensorial category that captures the experience of the digital photodiary practices moves away from the culturally constructed five-sense categories as a basis for explanations. In turn, these “mundane frictions” plays a crucial part in calling the sensory imaginations into action and give form to the experiential, non-representational and tacit aspects of the events or places the photos were part of when they were produced.

To elaborate theoretically on the concept of “mundane friction,” it is fruitful to relate it to Laura Marks’ use of the concept haptics, a concept she uses to develop our understandings of how we perceive images and film. Marks uses Deleuze and Guattari’s theories on smooth (haptic) and striated (optic) space to nuance visuality, not as dichotomies but instead as properties of space that slide into one another. She describes this urge to theoretically construct sensory categories that communicates embodied experiences as both a critic of the social and societal implications of the constructed five-sense categories for communicating experience and as a tool to deepen our understandings of alternative ways to think about how to capture experience. This perspective on vision as material and embodied goes in line with what this article outlines as the experience of “mundane friction.” However, when Marks is concerned with how embodied spectatorship of moving images is informed by detailed analysis of aesthetic experience of how cinematic sound-images affect and provoke the perception and understandings of the viewer, this research aims instead at an ethnographic approach contributing to a deeper understanding of how audio-visual digital media becomes embodied through practice. Following Pink’s argument that visual ethnographic methods offer routes to understand a contemporary technological and social world, “given that mobile and visual computing technologies are ubiquitous and moreover central to everyday socialities among some groups of people,” this research aims at contributing to understandings of experience of media as embodied and emplaced in people’s worlds beyond these media. The multisensory approach in the presented study highlights the crucial fact that the body, and the concrete “mundane friction” between bodies and technologies, plays a role in the process of everyday sensory emplacement in contemporary media.
practices, quite the opposite to what is sometimes claimed about the “disembodied” electronic age.

**PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The interdisciplinary theoretical framework outlined above urges scholars interested in how and why people engage in digital media to move beyond culturalist, representational and disembodied approaches into the experiential, non-representational, emplaced and sensory realm of everyday life. As suggested throughout this article, the “mundane frictions” caused by the handling of digital media in the everyday media practices plays a crucial part in highlighting the tacit and embodied aspects of learning through media. Theoretically, “mundane frictions,” and how the senses are united through motion and imaginations in relation to these frictions, suggests that digital visuality is inherently embodied and can hardly be conceptualised exclusively as visuality distinctive from other senses according to the Western construct of five sensorial categories.

The trajectory multisensory, non-media-centric media studies run in the same vein as theoretical perspectives on learning as non-representational, situated, embodied, part of practice and constitutive of place. This emplaced perspective on learning is advocated for in scholarships based in anthropological approaches to knowledge such as Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger’s perspective on situated learning. This perspective on learning insists on focusing on the whole person’s involvement in social practice including non-representational aspects of everyday life, which make it a viable point of departure in studies of how media becomes part of peoples everyday practices and how both these social and material practices are part of and constitutive of wider environments. These perspectives on learning in combination with non-media centric media studies provide a coherent theoretical framework for understandings of how media becomes part of people’s life-world based learning resources. As argued elsewhere, a notion of multisensoriality offers a viable route for developing situated perspectives on learning with media through the process of sensory emplacement. Therefore, it becomes relevant to understand what people do with their bodies in relation to media technologies and its content if we want to find new ways to understand media that acknowledge the continuities between mind, body, environment and the ongoingness of everyday worlds. New insights into how experience, meaning-making and pedagogy are generated through operating touchscreens, computer mouses and computers emanating from this research indicate that the clicking, tapping, stroking is not only part of, but is enhancing the tacit, embodied and material aspects of viewing images.

For pedagogical reasons, the insights provided through the presented research tell us to move beyond the simple assumption that teenagers have become multimodal, multitaskers, used to state-of-the-art technologies and visual media, and will therefore only engage in pedagogical contexts that seek to create such environments on a superficial level. However, through a multisensory perspective on digital visuality and its pedagogical implications, it might be reasonable to think about how the “mundane frictions” that is obviously part of contemporary digital photo-sharing is enhancing and developing not only observable behaviours such as clicking and stroking, but more so, tacit, experiential and non-representational aspects of learning.

**Notes**

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